

HIT AND MYTH
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BUSINESS EDITOR LINDA

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THE mortgage war raging among banks and building societies intensified yesterday when the Nationwide cut its variable rate for a million borrowers by a quarter of a point to 6.74 per cent.

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UNITED STATES helicopters were last night poised to begin rescuing hundreds of Britons and Americans who had sought refuge in the US Embassy while intense fighting continued to rage in Monrovia, the Liberian capital.

Some 30 Britons out of 56 registered with the British Embassy were sheltering in the American Embassy, with more than 200 of the 450 Americans in Liberia. Some 20,000 people are also camped with bundles of belongings and cooking pots under trees near the embassy annex.

The Foreign Office said yesterday that it was co-ordinating evacuation plans with the Americans, who promised to take out all British who wanted to leave.

Some aid workers outside the capital are likely to stay as they are not in immediate



No. 65,550

WEDNESDAY APRIL 10 1996

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Rates down again in mortgage war

BY ANNE ASHWORTH AND SARA MCCONNELL

THE mortgage war raging among banks and building societies intensified yesterday when the Nationwide cut its variable rate for a million borrowers by a quarter of a point to 6.74 per cent.

The new rate, a belated response to last month's base rate cut, is the lowest to be declared by a major lender and is half a point below most of its rivals. Interest paid to savers will also be cut.

old-fashioned building society at a time when rivals are offering hand-outs as they convert into banks. The latest change, which takes effect on May 1, takes rates to their lowest level since January 1985.

A Nationwide customer with a £50,000 repayment mortgage will now pay £326.03 a month, £14.44 less than at the Halifax. In March 1990, when rates hit a peak of 15.4 per cent, such a borrower would have paid £603.

ing Society, the tenth in the league, swiftly cut the rate for its 150,000 borrowers to 6.74 per cent. A Halifax spokeswoman said: "We keep our rates under review, but we are not intending to take any action as a result of the Nationwide's move."

keen to illustrate their commitment to their traditional mutual status where the society is owned by its savers and borrowers, despite the leveraged takeover and conversion speculation prevailing among other building societies. Both have launched special reward schemes for their members in an attempt to match the windfalls on offer from societies that are becoming banks.

latest move proved "you are really better off with a building society". There is some evidence that lower interest rates are attracting people back to the housing market. Nearly a third of estate agents saw prices rise in their areas last month, according to the National Association of Estate Agents — the first time that such a high proportion of agents have seen signs of a price increase since 1989.

unmoved by the fact that rates are at a 30-year low. They may be more swayed by the fact that houses are far more affordable than they were for their parents in the Sixties.



US helicopters ready to mount Liberian rescue

BY MICHAEL BINYON AND LEYLA LINTON

UNITED STATES helicopters were last night poised to begin rescuing hundreds of Britons and Americans who had sought refuge in the US Embassy while intense fighting continued to rage in Monrovia, the Liberian capital.

A State Department official said in Washington that the helicopters, that arrived in Monrovia from Sierra Leone "will not go back empty".

danger. Richard Burge, an aid programme co-ordinator, said it had been relatively quiet overnight, but armed youths were roaming the street and there had been some looting.

Seven staff for Save the Children have been sheltering from the fighting in a safe apartment block in Mambo Point since Friday. They had been bringing healthcare and food to the front lines in the interior but the fighting had gradually forced them to suspend their operations during the past two weeks.

four days of clashes that have left scores dead. Fighting and looting began on Saturday after the ruling Council of State sacked Roosevelt Johnson as Minister of Rural Development and ordered his arrest for murder in a clash with the militia.

Dozens of Lebanese hostages were still being held as fighters loyal to Mr Johnson sought refuge in the former army barracks. About 40 Lebanese, mostly women and children, were seized, together with about 20 Nigerians from Econog, the West African peace-keeping force, and several hundred Liberians. Three Lebanese have been freed.



Pauline Robinson who administered vital first aid on a flight from Kuala Lumpur

Nurse wins mid-air battle to save sick tennis player

BY LYN JENKINS

A BRITISH nurse battled for two hours aboard a Jumbo jet to save the life of a leading tennis player who had collapsed with a suspected brain infection.

her home in Ravenshorpe, Northamptonshire. "I have seen people like that before and knew it was something cerebral. I thought she had meningitis or encephalitis. I thought she was going to die and told the stewardesses I did not think she would make it back to England."

wrapped Miss Needham in four airline blankets and held her head in the ice-filled cushion for two hours while the British Airways jumbo jet jettisoned more than 300 tonnes of fuel over the sea in order to land at Madras airport.

Miss Needham, who is ranked 30 among British women players, was a top junior competitor but opted to put her tennis career on hold while studying for a degree at Loughborough University.

Doctors at the Apollo Hospital, Madras, carried out tests including a brain scan but have been unable to diagnose her condition. Yesterday she was said to be improving and doctors said that her illness was not life threatening.

Joan Hobbs, her stepfather, spoke to her on the telephone in her hospital bed yesterday. "She was still very groggy so it is hard to work out what happened. But it appears she probably had some virus and had a violent reaction to it."



Needham: collapsed with suspected brain infection

War veterans claim pensions at the double

BY MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

SECOND World War veterans who "bit the bullet" and accepted wartime sufferings rather than ask for a pension after demobilisation are coming forward in their thousands to claim their rights.

Most are in their 70s and 80s but one 90-year-old from the First World War, who served as an infantryman at the Somme and had always complained of deafness, was among the most recent to be granted a war pension.

The surge in claimants comes after a campaign by the Royal British Legion and other welfare organisations.

The latest Department of Social Security figures show that in 1995-96 an estimated 331,000 veterans or their widows will be getting pensions worth an estimated £1.247 million. Yet between 1967 and 1987, only 76,000 veterans were awarded pensions or lump sum gratuities. Since 1987, a further 297,700 awards have been made.

One difficulty has been to prove disabilities were caused by war service and were not

part of growing old. The deafened 90-year-old ex-infantryman, who has now died, was also gassed in the First World War. "But he never associated his disabilities with his war service," Tom House, head of pensions at the Royal British Legion, said yesterday. Had he claimed in 1919, he would have been paid the equivalent of more than £320,000 in pension over 77 years at today's rates.

He added: "These men didn't claim because they were the type who bit the bullet and accepted their problems. They had seen comrades with legs blown off and didn't feel it was right to claim for their minor sufferings."

Veterans suffering up to 19 per cent disability receive a lump sum, ranging from more than £1,500 to about £6,000. But they get a pension only if they can prove their condition has deteriorated.

A £20-a-week pension is awarded to those suffering from a 20 per cent disability. It rises to a weekly £100 for a 100 per cent disability.

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Broken leg footballer faces year of injury

DAVID BUSSETT, the Coventry City defender who broke his leg in the second minute of the Carling Premiership game against Manchester United at the weekend, will face at least a year out of the game.

He underwent an operation last night at Hope Hospital, Salford, and faces more surgery tomorrow on the horrific injury that halted the match for nine minutes. He was said to be "comfortable".

Raymond Ross, Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon, said: "I would say it will take a minimum of three months for the fracture to heal and it could be six."

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Core states seek new mechanism

Tory MPs press Clarke to resist 'son of ERM'

By Philip Webster, Political Editor

KENNETH CLARKE was urged by Conservative MPs yesterday to stand firm against demands from Germany, France and Brussels for Britain to take part in a new exchange-rate mechanism.

The Chancellor is expected to please the Euro-sceptics by fighting pressure from other European Union finance ministers on Friday for a "son of ERM" to accommodate countries that do not go into the single currency planned to start in 1999.

The core single currency countries are pushing for an arrangement under which those outside the currency are subject to exchange-rate limits so that they cannot competitively devalue their money against the new euro.

There are even suggestions that refusal to enter a new ERM framework could result in trade and other sanctions being imposed on Britain.

Senior ministers and MPs rejected the idea as reflecting the "paranoia" of some in Europe about Britain's intentions. But Treasury sources emphasised Mr Clarke's determination to fight a new ERM when it is discussed at the meeting in Verona on

Friday. In a letter to the Italian Finance Minister, the Chancellor says that an old-style mechanism would create rigid exchange-rate links between those inside and outside a single currency. "Experience has shown that such systems cannot cope with times of major market stress and turbulence. The run-up to European monetary union and immediately afterwards could be such a time."

"For our part we see no case for a new ERM which would be almost bound to fail if it tried to encompass economies which were by definition non-convergent as defined by the treaty."

He says, however, that there will be a need for "alternative measures" to restrict the stresses and strains. Mr Clarke is understood to believe that other EU countries should adopt the Government's practice of setting inflation targets as a means of achieving stability.

David Howell, chairman of the Commons Foreign Affairs Select Committee, accused the Franco-German alliance of being "obsessed" with the idea that Britain would indulge in competitive devaluation. "It's

imaginary paranoia. We did not deliberately leave the ERM. We were pushed out because our rate was too high. We would not deliberately devalue. We don't believe in it. We are not going to commit this sin which they are trying to punish us for."

He said the Europeans could not force Britain to join the new ERM as there was no obligation in any of the treaties. "The Chancellor should stick to his guns. We will pursue policies which support our interest and don't deliberately want to harm other countries who want to try to form an inner core," he said.

A leading sceptic, Nicholas Budgen, said that the Tory party would erupt if there was an attempt to rejoin the ERM. "Mr Clarke should just politely say no."

European finance ministers are to discuss how to link the proposed single currency with the currencies of European member states that do not join. France and Germany fear a series of competitive devaluations by countries who remain outside the single currency, which would make their exports cheaper and undermine the system. Britain retains the right to opt out of the single currency and the Government has said it will make a decision nearer the time and when the economic circumstances are clearer.

Labour has said it would join the single currency only if there was convergence of the European economies over jobs on top of the Maastricht treaty criteria.

Sir Leon Brittan, Vice-President of the European Commission, played down suggestions of a new rift between Britain and other members. "Britain has a common interest with her partners in the system not being destabilised, because if it were that would harm Britain as much as it would anybody else," he said.

Bernard Connolly, page 18



Patrick Dalziel-Job with a portrait of his wife, and, below, in wartime uniform

Tribute to a war hero as brave as James Bond

By Adrian Lee

A FORMER naval officer who disobeyed orders to save the lives of 4,500 civilians in wartime Norway, and who is said to be the inspiration for James Bond, will be honoured tonight.

Sub Lieutenant Patrick Dalziel-Job risked a court martial when he commanded a fleet of fishing boats to evacuate an entire village shortly before it was destroyed in a bombing raid by the Germans. The action of the young officer was recognised by the Norwegians but widely ignored in Britain because of his disobedience.

Over three days and two nights, at the end of May 1940, every man, woman and child in the coastal village of Narvik was taken to safety on 100 boats. The village was virtually empty when waves of German bombers arrived the next day and razed the wooden houses to the ground in a reprisal attack. There were just four casualties.

Mr Dalziel-Job is now an 82-year-old widower who lives in Wester Ross, Highland. At the time he was 27

and knew the northern Norwegian coastline from his days, before the war, when he crewed a schooner, among the fjords.

Following the rescue operation he served with the author Ian Fleming in his undercover advance assault commando unit in occupied France and Germany. When Fleming published his Bond novels, former colleagues of Dalziel-Job immediately saw him as the model for the secret agent.

Mr Dalziel-Job, who married one of the Norvik survivors, was awarded one of Norway's highest honours, the Knights Cross of the Royal Norwegian Order of St Olav (first class), by the late King Haakon VII. He believes his defiance cost him a sea-going command with the Royal Navy. Allied Command had forbidden him from using civilian craft to evacuate the village and only the intervention of the King helped the young officer escape a court martial. Speaking yesterday, Mr Dalziel-Job said: "I think I succeeded



because I had the trust of the skippers and because the movements were made to look like fishing trips. I discussed the plan with the mayor and we agreed that the civilians should be got out quickly because we knew that a German raid would come sooner rather than later — and that is exactly what happened. My commanders did not think the Germans were coming and I got the order that I was not to repeat not to utilise civilian craft. I was threatened with court martial but the Norwegian king wrote a very complimentary letter to my superiors — I think it embarrassed them."

Tonight he will be joined by survivors of the evacuation on the BBC's *Hearts of Gold* programme, when his exploits will be recalled with the use of previously unseen archive footage.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Murder police seek anonymous caller

A man has telephoned police anonymously with information that could identify the killer of Janet Brown, who was handcuffed and battered to death at her Buckinghamshire farmhouse a year ago today.

Detectives yesterday appealed for the caller to make contact again. They have never established a motive for the murder of the 51-year-old medical researcher, who was alone in her home in the village of Radnage, when her killer broke in through a window. Detective Superintendent Mike Short said that a man had twice rung police in February. "We are keen to hear from the caller again as soon as possible and he can contact us in the strictest confidence. I don't believe this is a hoax and I don't believe it is the killer himself."

At the time of the murder, Mrs Brown's husband, Graham, a research scientist, was working in Switzerland, where he still lives. Their elder daughter and son, Zara and Benedict, were away at university, while their 17-year-old daughter Roxanne was staying with friends.

Dunblane date agreed

The judicial inquiry into the massacre at Dunblane Primary School last month, in which 16 children and their class teacher were shot dead, will take place in Stirling, five miles from the school, the Scottish Office announced. Lord Cullen, 60, a senior Scottish judge who carried out the investigation into the Piper Alpha disaster, will head the inquiry. The preliminary hearings will begin on May 1. Witnesses at the inquiry will be called to give evidence under oath.

Drugs on earl's farm

A farm manager on Earl Waldegrave's estate at Chewton Mendip, Somerset, grew £75,000 worth of the strongest cannabis ever seized by police. Bristol Crown Court was told yesterday. John Lucksted cultivated 1,000 plants on land belonging to the earl, older brother of William Waldegrave, the Treasury Chief Secretary. Mr Lucksted denies possession with intent to supply others but admits growing the plants for his own use, and five other charges. The trial continues.

Walsall Left fields four

Left-wing Labour rebels in Walsall, West Midlands, are fielding four candidates in next month's local elections, defying attempts by the party nationally to end the embarrassing civil war inside the local group. The decision by four wards who support the rebels to put up candidates threatens to split the Labour vote and could even open the way for the Conservatives to become the largest united party on the council.

Partner quit BBC deal

The Saudi-owned partner in the BBC Arabic Television channel said yesterday that it "unilaterally terminated" its contract because of the *Panorama* programme about Saudi Arabia broadcast last week. Orbit Communications said the programme was a "sneering and racist attack on Islamic law and culture". Orbit, which transmitted BBC Arabic Television to the Middle East, is owned by a group chaired by Prince Khalid bin Abdullah al-Saud, a cousin of King Fahd.

Twins' murders linked

Police are treating as a double murder the deaths of identical twins found within days of each other in the Regent's Canal in Islington, north London. Medical tests carried out yesterday confirmed that Christopher Langford, 38, drowned after being beaten up. Police sources said that the killings were being linked because the head injuries matched those which killed his brother Anthony. They are believed to have died at the same time.

Invention eats oil spills

A foam that can greatly improve the cleaning of coastlines after an oil tanker spill has been developed by a team at the University of York. It contains millions of oil-eating bacteria and nutrients, allowing the bugs to flourish. The foam, which is easy to ship to a disaster site, also dramatically increases the surface area of oil that comes under bacterial attack. The foam was tested during the recent *Sea Empress* disaster off Milford Haven.

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Labour offers plan to defuse Ulster marches

By Philip Webster and Nicholas Watt

AN INDEPENDENT commission to advise the police on whether sensitive marches should be rerouted or banned is being proposed by the Labour leadership as a way of defusing tensions in Northern Ireland as the marching season gets under way.

A committee of experts who would consult community groups, the churches, marching organisations and the police is seen as a means of preventing the Royal Ulster Constabulary from being dragged into political controversy. The idea was put forward yesterday after a night of bloody clashes between police and loyalist demonstrators sparked fears of an escalation of violence which could threaten the peace process.

Ronnie Flanagan, the Deputy Chief Constable of the RUC, called on nationalists and unionists to compromise to avoid a repetition of the disturbances in Belfast. As seven men appeared in court charged in connection with the riot, Mr Flanagan appealed for common sense from the organisers of loyalist parades and from nationalists threatening counter demonstrations.

He said: "When people organise processions and protests, although they are not themselves responsible for the disorder, they have to realise the possible outcome of their action."

Labour's proposed committee would report to the RUC, which would have the final say. The party believes its verdicts would have wider public support if they were shown to have been taken after consulting wider interests.

Only the Northern Ireland Secretary can ban marches, but he or she would do so after listening to police advice. Marjorie Mowlam, the Shadow Northern Ireland Secretary, said last night that the "microcosm of the problems of Northern Ireland".

She said: "A small independent body of advisers would give the RUC's decisions a strong moral authority and could help to ease a difficult position."

Mr Flanagan said that disputes during the marching season could not be resolved by the police alone and were a problem for society to tackle.

The violence broke out on the Ormeau Road, south Belfast, where police had banned a parade by the Apprentice Boys. Most of the 3000 parades during the marching season, which lasts until the end of August, will pass off peacefully. However, police will be working hard over the coming weeks to avoid violence at other flashpoints.

David Ervine, leader of the Progressive Union Party, the political wing of the Ulster Volunteer Force, said yesterday that the riot on Monday was "a spark" which could plunge Northern Ireland back into another 25 years of terrorism.

Martin Smith, the Ulster Unionist MP for South Belfast and grandmaster of the Orange Order, accused police of making a "fatal mistake" in rerouting Monday's parade.

Labour is also calling on the Government to rebuild confidence in the peace process by publishing swiftly the ground rules for the inter-party negotiations about the future of Northern Ireland.

With the Commons preparing to rush through later this month the legislation paving the way for the May 30 elections, Labour is concerned that lack of details about the role of the new peace forum and the way the negotiations will be conducted is standing in the way of progress.

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Britain a 'gambling free-for-all'

Lottery regulator accused of failing to protect young

By DOMINIC KENNEDY, ANDREW PIERCE AND STEWART TENDLER

THE National Lottery regulator has failed to perform his basic duty, to curb the worst gambling excesses of addicts and children, according to a report on the first year.

The Independent Directory of Social Change, which provides research for voluntary organisations, says of Peter Davis: "He cannot help reminding us of a predecessor at the start of the last century, of whom a Select Committee reported: 'Mr Wood, the Inspector of Lotteries, has performed no duties and he has declared to your Committee that there do not appear to him to be any duties to perform.'"

Mr Davis is accused of failing to commission research to find out whether vulnerable people are buying scratchcards and are becoming addicted to them. He is also said to have done little to stop under 16s illegally buying tickets for the weekly draw.

"He is required not to license any game which will encourage persons to participate excessively in such lotteries". It is hard to see how he could meet this responsibility unless he arranged to find out whether such excessive participation was taking place," say the authors of *The National*



Davis said research by Oflot was continuing

Lottery Yearbook, published today with financial assistance from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation. They add: "The Director of OFLOT has said: 'I will not tolerate the sale of lottery tickets to under 16s', but it appears that he is tolerating just that."

Camelot, the police and trading standards officers are currently arguing over who is responsible for investigating rogue traders who sell to children. A meeting of chief constables today is expected to agree that the police will not waste expensive manpower

watching shops for the relatively trivial offence of selling lottery slips and cards to children. Instead they will pass information to Camelot.

The report says: "Britain is now moving towards a gambling free-for-all which is unlikely to end without tears. In particular the much-criticised scratchcards, though turning out to be unnecessary to the success of the lottery, have spawned an unpleasant 'scratchcard culture' alongside the more acceptable weekly draw." Scratchcards are compared with hard gambling. Although sales of Camelot cards are declining, the authors believe that is due to the success of competitors.

Mr Davis said OFLOT had conducted research using four organisations and was paying for more on attitudes and children. "Most major national lotteries around the world combine on-line and instant [scratchcard] games," he said. "There is no evidence that scratchcards have caused excess participation or damaging social effects in the UK. Early indications are that average levels of spending are not dissimilar to those on the weekly draw game" — £2.63 per player per week.

Mr Davis resisted pressure to resign last year when it emerged he had taken free flights on a private jet and helicopter owned by GTECH, an American partner of Camelot, and stayed with one of its directors.

The Liberal Democrats, who passed a resolution at their last party conference to abolish the scratchcard, agreed with the broad thrust of the charity's report, edited by Luke Fitzherbert. A spokeswoman said: "Research on scratchcards is virtually impossible because of the difficulties of monitoring their sales. We stand by our pledge to abolish them. They are addictive and open to abuse, especially by young people."

The Tory MP Sir Rhodes Boyson was concerned about the effects of scratchcards. "It is difficult to detect the true age of young people. While an under-age drinker is unlikely to kill themselves in one day, an under-age scratchcard player could bankrupt a family. There is a real fear that they are addictive. But I have no answers as to how they can be regulated."

Dr Lewis Moonie, a Labour heritage spokesman, urged the Government to commission urgent social research into the impact of the lottery. He also argued that it was premature to heap scorn on scratchcards.

Dr Moonie said: "It is obligatory on Government to see that proper social research is conducted into the effects of the lottery. It should already have been done. I do not blame the regulator for the absence of proper research. I blame the Government."



Staff preparing one of the mummies yesterday for display in the museum

Wraps to come off museum mummies

By GILLIAN BOWDITCH

ONE of Britain's best collections of Egyptian mummies, which have been gathering dust for decades in the vaults of the National Museum of Scotland, are to go on display for the first time after DNA testing to discover their medical secrets.

The mummies, up to 4,000 years old and including three rare child mummies, will be examined over the next three days by a team of doctors, dentists and pathologists in what archaeologists believe will give the best understanding of Egyptian mummies to date. The public will be able to watch a number of the tests being performed.

Only two of the 11 mummies, which have been in the museum's collection since 1912, have been displayed publicly before. The museum yesterday launched a four-year research project into the mummies, which will be used as the basis of a new gallery of Egyptology.

The mummy collection at the National Museum in Edinburgh is of international importance. Two will soon go on loan to the British Museum and then on to the Louvre. Of particular significance are two three-year-old children, believed to be twins, who were interred in a double coffin. Twin burials were rare in ancient Egypt and the DNA testing hopes to establish whether they died at the same time.

IN THE TIMES



FASHION

Forty pages of summer style for men

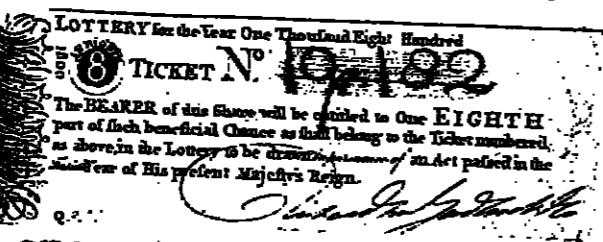
FILMS

Giles Whittell on John Travolta, John Woo and Hong Kong in Hollywood



FOOD

Paul Heiney's new column for cooks



Official tickets were shunned by many gamblers

Betting fever led wives to tell tales

By DOMINIC KENNEDY

THE unfortunate Mr Wood, criticised for his performance as Inspector of Lotteries in 1808, was appointed and paid by the Government of George III at a time when gamblers sought to avoid the official "good causes" levy by buying cheaper tickets, or "insurances", from underground bookmakers.

There were no police, so the authorities relied on informers to report illegal gambling. Tongues were loosened by a reward equal to a third of the fine imposed by magistrates. The most eager informants were wives sneaking on their husbands.

The first national lottery was in 1596 to repair the Cinque Ports. The last, before last year, was in 1826.

A Select Committee in 1808 reported that as a result of lotteries, "idleness, dissipation and poverty are increased, the most sacred and confidential of trusts are be-

trayed, domestic comfort is destroyed, madness often created, crimes subjected the perpetrators of them to the punishment of death are committed, and even suicide itself is produced."

Everybody was suspected of involvement in the scam, including officials, but no evidence was produced to show that Mr Wood was a conspirator. Punishments included sending "ruffians and vagabonds" to a House of Penal Servitude for six months, or until the draw was over. Between communal and trial, witnesses were tampered with or disappeared.

There were doubts about the economic logic of the lotteries, since the cost of parish relief rose to cover families impoverished by speculation. "No mode of raising money appears so burdensome, so pernicious, and so unproductive," the Select Committee reported.

Thief who shot himself was double murderer

By PAUL WILKINSON AND STEWART TENDLER

A GUNMAN who shot himself after a failed gems raid was a psychopathic killer who faced life imprisonment for the murders of two Britons in Spain and Portugal, police said yesterday.

John William Holden was also a suspected bigamist with at least four wives in this country and others overseas. Known in the underworld as Big John, he was wanted on two Interpol warrants and sought in Britain for fleeing an armed robbery trial six years ago.

Portuguese police were hunting him for the death of Andrew Bonnier in October 1993 on the Algarve. Spanish police wanted him for the murder last July at Fuengirola of Gerald McDonald, 34, a Scotsman.

Yesterday Chief Inspector Ignacio Contreras, the Spanish detective searching for Holden, said: "I can't say I was sorry to hear of this man's demise. He was a timebomb. Wherever we pursued our inquiries, Holden spelt death and violence. Thank God he pressed the self-destruct button." He added: "He was a psychopath and an alcoholic. Drink brought out the killer instinct in him."

Holden killed himself with a



Holden: police want his wives to come forward

single round to the head last week after escaping from a jewellery shop in Hull when the owner raised the alarm. He was carrying an automatic handgun and 40 rounds of ammunition as well as a CS gas canister and a two-way radio. Unarmed police cornered him in the car park of a toy store after a chase in which he shot at pursuing officers. Yesterday Michael Speakman, Assistant Chief Constable of Humberside Police, said: "Why he shot himself is a matter for the coroner. But I can certainly speculate it was to avoid a hefty prison sentence. 'We are extremely lucky

that people were not killed by him last Thursday. If he had decided to open up, there could have been another Dunblane and there was no reason why he should not have done — he had nothing to lose," he said.

Detective Superintendent Geoffrey Walker said that Holden had used false passports to travel the world, visiting the Philippines, Thailand, the Gulf and Europe. He said: "Holden is a bigamist who already has many wives, whom we wish to trace. We believe there could be more hiding in the woodwork."

Mr Walker said that Holden was known to have wives in Derby, Rhyl, his home town of Doncaster and Bridlington, and had at least two children in their 20s. He said: "He had gone through a form of marriage with several women but relatively little is known of his background."

Last night the father of the man Holden murdered in the Algarve said Holden's suicide had robbed his family of the revenge they desperately wanted.

Michael Bonnier, of Kenley, south London, said Andrew, his son, had been shot simply because he refused to give Holden information about security systems used by Group Four, his former employer.

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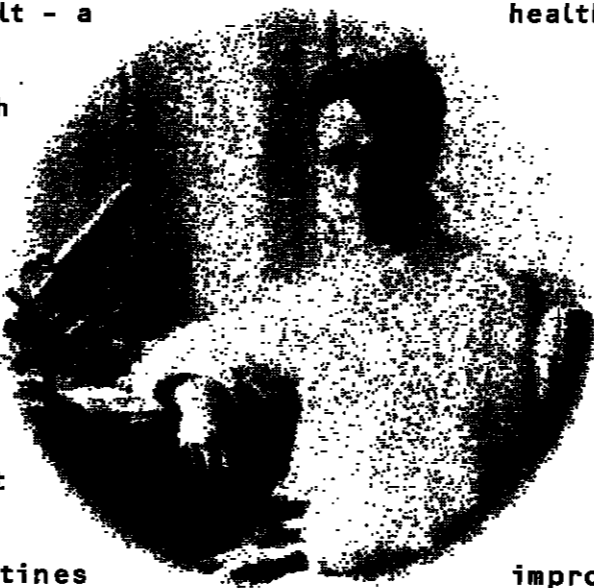
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Serious Fraud Office investigates 'own a bird' scheme that promised rich returns

Collapse of ostrich firm leaves investors in limbo

By Robert Miller, Karen Zagor and Michael Hornsby

THE Serious Fraud Office will launch an official investigation this week into the multi-million-pound collapse of the Ostrich Farming Corporation amid mounting concern from thousands of investors who thought they were backing the latest fashionable investment. People were persuaded to invest in the corporation, which used the funds to buy ostriches. In the past few months the birds have become very marketable because their meat has been seen as a healthy alternative to beef. It is now sold in Harrods and some Asda stores. Many schools have taken beef off their menus and are experimenting with ostrich burgers. Ostrich feathers sell for up to £400 per pound and can be used for theatrical costumes and non-static dusters while the hide is used for handbags. Investing in ostriches has captured the public imagination. The corporation's birds are kept at several locations in Belgium and the company said investors were buying their very own bird which would be identified by an electronic device. However, the SFO investigation is expected to centre on concerns that some of the ostriches were in fact owned by a number of investors rather than one. The firm has strongly denied any



Ostrich meat was seen as a healthy alternative to beef. Some schools are serving ostrich burgers

wrongdoing. An SFO team of senior lawyers, police officers and forensic accountants are studying files relating to the firm, which were handed over at a meeting last week with officials from the Department of Trade and Industry.

Last Wednesday the department went to the High Court to ask for the firm to be wound up. The Official Receiver, whose job is "to protect and preserve the assets and financial records of the company", was appointed provisional liquidator until a full winding-up petition is heard on or before May 8.

The firm has been the target of a number of unrelated investigations by consumer watchdogs. The Advertising Standards Authority is look-

ing into promises of exceptional investment profits in the company's advertising. The Securities and Investments Board, the chief City regulator, also investigated the firm but handed its findings on in the DTI. The board was particularly concerned over claims of a so-called guaranteed annual return of more than 50 per cent over five years.

The senior City watchdog concluded that ostriches, like other animals, are not regarded as investments by the board. This means that companies promoting such schemes will not be covered by the official Investors Compensation Scheme in the event that the firm crashes. People who have put their money into

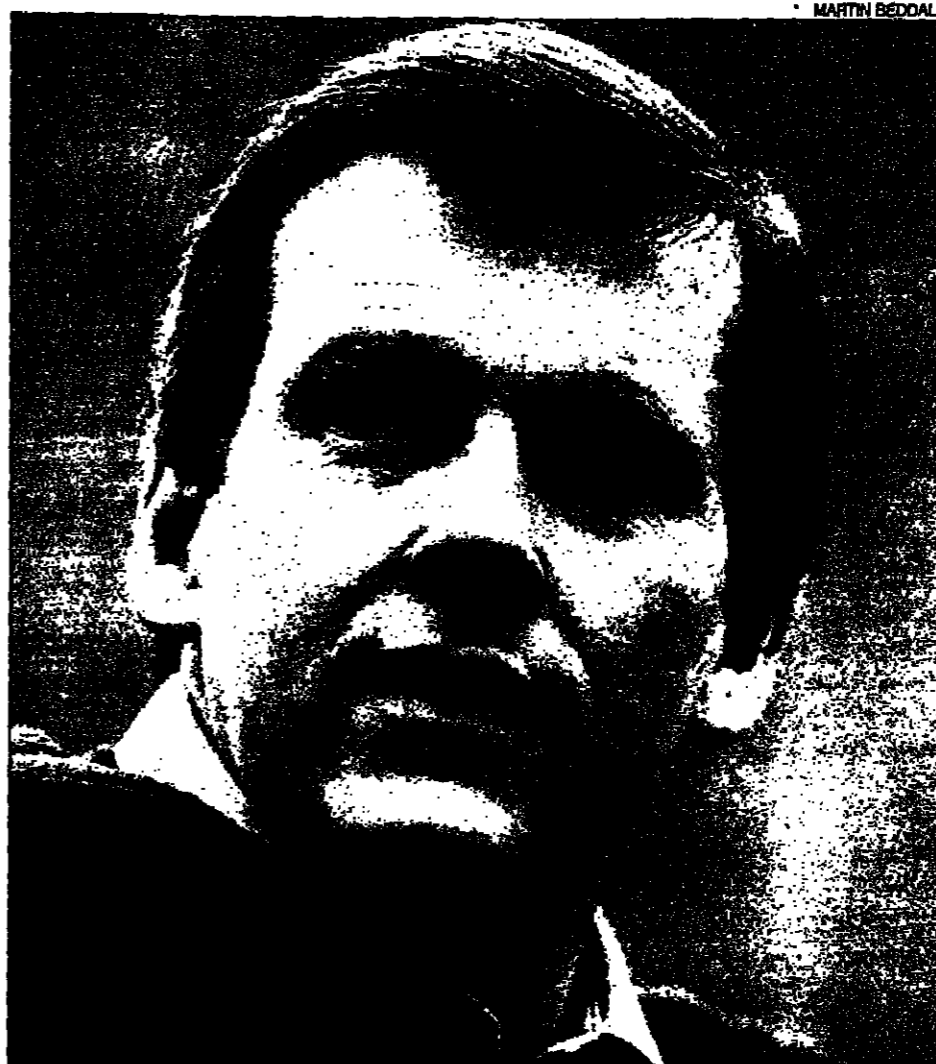
any such company therefore cannot expect to receive any payouts or help from the compensation scheme. The firm's headquarters are in Mansfield, Nottingham, although the ostriches are allegedly kept at several farms in Belgium.

Richard Wall, an investor from North Yorkshire, said: "It's all very well having guarantees that we own the birds, but that's only worth the paper it's written on." Another investor, Gary Holloway added: "I am worried sick."

Justin Urquhart Stewart, a director of Barclays Stockbrokers, examined claims made by the firm. He said: "I went through the return on investment figures that they produce and I could not agree their calculations based on industry standard figures on any occasion and I found this to be grossly misleading."

Mr Wall said he had been reassured by Brian Ketchell, the firm's managing director, that the birds were being well looked after. "Brian rang me, which backs my view that the guy isn't a villain. He just rang to say that everything is fine and that they will be reporting back to the owners when they can. But there is a limit to what they can say with the Receiver there."

Mr Ketchell's business acumen was under question in 1991 after Video Magic, a company that he ran, went into administration. There has



Richard Wall says his guarantees are worth only the paper they're written on

also been concern about his links with the Alchemy pyramid-selling scheme which was closed down by the DTI. He also employed Kevin Jones, Alchemy's former head, to market the ostrich firm. An investor who spent £20,000 to buy three birds in

the first stage of what was to have been a £42,000 investment said he wanted to preserve his anonymity. "I'm feeling foolish. My broker rang to rub the salt in today. When I first heard about it, I thought it was too good to be true, but the company was

plausible — the investment was supposedly protected because the birds are held in Belgium. believe the Official Receiver has been over in Belgium counting the birds, and there is some concern that the company allocated birds to more than one person."

Bermuda banker is accused of £1.8m theft

By Stephen Farrell

A BRITISH banker has been arrested in Bermuda and charged with stealing £1.8 million from the island's second largest bank. David Diggins, 49, was arrested at Bermuda International Airport as he flew back from holiday in Britain.

Mr Diggins, senior manager of international credit and foreign loans at the Bank of Butterfield, appeared before Will Francis, Bermuda's senior magistrate, charged with stealing US\$2,512,000 and inducing a woman to deliver the money by pretending to have authorisation. He is also charged with falsifying a document with intent to defraud.

He was remanded on £40,000 bail and £80,000 sureties from friends. His passport was confiscated and he must report to a police station each morning.

Mr Diggins, from Hertfordshire, has not entered a formal plea but Julian Hall, his attorney, said he would "most certainly be denying" the charges. Mr Diggins, who is married with two children, arrived in Bermuda in September 1992. If convicted in the Supreme Court, he faces up to five years in jail.

Mr Hall added: "Quite frankly my client is mystified that the matter has gone this far this quickly, with so much damage to his reputation." The bank said that Mr Diggins was arrested after an internal investigation.

Ski victim was off-piste in treacherous resort

By Oliver August

A BRITISH skier who died after falling nearly 900ft in the French Alps was a keen sportsman who lived life to the full, neighbours said yesterday.

Ceiwen Faulkner, 32, slipped as a guide was taking her and her husband Peter with three other skiers down a treacherous mountain path. They had been skiing off-piste at 6,800ft near the resort of La Grave.

The stretch where she fell was extremely steep and had become icy after the snow had melted. "Every season we have several bad accidents up there. It is inevitable. Thick snow gives way to ice and unexpected drops. Even in good weather skiers are putting themselves at great risk," a mountain rescue worker in La Grave said yesterday.

Antoine Sullivan, a neighbour of the Faulkners in

Highbury, north London, described them as a very friendly and happy couple. "They were wonderful people, very active and sporty. They were always off on some holiday or another; skiing, scuba diving and tennis," he said.

Mrs Faulkner's family arrived in La Grave yesterday morning to comfort her husband, at the Edelweiss Hotel, where the couple had stayed before. They were expected back in Britain last night.

The French police have opened an inquiry into the accident after being notified of Mrs Faulkner's death in the accident on Monday.

La Grave is regarded as a dangerous resort and skiers are advised to take a guide. There are no safety nets above its many crevasses and no marked pistes or safety patrols.

"It is an inhospitable place and has a reputation for being particularly dangerous," David

Hearns of the Ski Club of Great Britain said. The club recommends that skiers carry avalanche transceivers when skiing in La Grave. The small radio devices emit a continuous signal that helps to locate avalanche victims.

In January a member of the club died in La Grave after being caught in an avalanche. Monty Montague, 38, was an experienced skier and had been skiing with a French friend when treacherous conditions closed in.

The dangers of La Grave were highlighted last year when a round-the-world ski tour tragically ended in the resort. Lucy Dicker and Arnie Wilson had just achieved their ambition of travelling around the world skiing on every day for a year. They had travelled to 13 countries and covered 110,000 miles in 237 resorts without a serious injury. But French-born Miss Dicker, 41, died after falling on ice and hitting a rock wall.

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Bargain hunters boost supermarket sales of sirloin

By MICHAEL HORNSBY
AGRICULTURE CORRESPONDENT

BEEF sales are rising as fears of catching Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease subside, traders said yesterday. In Brussels today, European Union veterinary experts may approve a partial lifting of the global ban on British beef products, an EU spokesman said. The move is expected to be limited to declaring beef-derived gelatine safe.

The main impetus to the retail market in Britain has come from a surge in supermarket sales of cut-price beef. The wholesale trade

remains more sluggish because of large stocks of unsaleable beef overhanging the market.

Asda reported the most pronounced evidence of returning consumer confidence, with sales running at 30 per cent above normal during a week-long promotion of prime cuts of beef at one-third off the usual price. "We have been surprised by the strength of demand, especially for prime joints and steaks," a spokesman said. "Sales of sausages and mince, which many people associate with BSE (bovine spongiform encephalopathy), have been much slower."

The promotion is now over, apart from sirloin steak which is still selling at about a third off. Obviously, we do not expect sales to continue at the level of the past week, but we feel strongly that confidence is returning. Customers seem to be reassured by our guarantees that all our beef comes from animals under 30 months of age.

Under a deal struck with other European Union countries in Luxembourg last week, no meat can be sold for human consumption from animals older than 30 months. Hardly any animals younger than this have ever developed BSE,

which has been linked to Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease.

Gelatine, used in a variety of products, was affected by the total ban on British beef exports imposed by the EU last month. Aspects of that ban are to be considered by the EU's Scientific Veterinary Committee. The World Health Organisation insists that gelatine poses no risk to humans.

The British Government will plead for an easing of the emergency measures. There is no question of the ban being lifted entirely, at least not before Douglas Hogg, the Agriculture Minister, has submitted

detailed plans for a selective slaughter policy, as he has agreed to do by the end of the month.

Sainsbury yesterday reported sales running at about 80 per cent of what they were before March 20, the date on which Stephen Dorrell, the Health Secretary, disclosed evidence of a possible link between "mad cow" disease and CJD.

However, at the Smithfield wholesale market, Tony Riley, of the superintendents' office, said: "Beef sales are still so low that at the moment we are not even bothering to quote prices." About 31,500 tonnes, worth £79 million, is

being held in abattoir chiller rooms and warehouses both here and abroad and on ships at sea because there is now no market for it, according to a survey by the Meat and Livestock Commission.

German politicians have demanded an end to Britain's rebate on contributions to the European Union, in view of the EU aid that London is receiving to compensate for the destruction of cattle over 30 months old. "This rebate can no longer be justified," the European policy spokeswoman of the opposition Social Democrat Party, Heidemarie Wiecek-Zeul, said yesterday.

day. Edwin Huber, the Christian Social Union Finance Minister of Bavaria, had earlier complained that Germans were being asked to pay for a disaster which the British Government had partly brought upon itself.

At a West Midlands slaughterhouse, selling horsemeat steaks at bargain prices, Bob Walker claimed to have sold 300lb of horse flesh to some 30 buyers yesterday, in a precinct in Smethwick. "It is very good value," he said, at the shop he has named Cheval Butchers. "I am selling the best cuts at no more than 80p a lb."

Princess's fake kiss advert is censured

By A STAFF REPORTER

A COMPLAINT on behalf of the Queen about a faked photograph of the Princess of Wales kissing Paul Gascoigne has been upheld by the Advertising Standards Authority.

The picture, based on the wedding day kiss between the Princess and her husband on the balcony of Buckingham Palace, was used in newspaper advertising for the cable channel Live TV. The advertisement, for the programme *Live Predictions*, was headlined "Who knows what the future holds?" Gascoigne was wearing a crazy grin.

Yesterday's report from the authority said that Charles Anson, the Queen's press secretary, complained that the advertisement was distasteful. He also objected to its use without permission from the Lord Chamberlain, the Lord Chamberlain, Kevin MacKenzie, managing director of Live TV and former Editor of *The Sun*, said: "This image was simply a piece of fun. I have no intention of withdrawing the advert. It is no longer right that they [the Royal Family] should be protected by this sort of arcane behaviour."

The report says: "The advertisers argued that, because the wedding photograph had been in the public domain for 15 years, their use of it was not an invasion of privacy. They believed the approach was humorous and not offensive."

The authority agreed that the approach was not offensive but nevertheless reminded the advertisers that references to members of the Royal Family in advertisements are not normally permitted: advertisers should consult the Lord Chamberlain's Office.

Buckingham Palace said yesterday that it complained only rarely about misuse of royal images in British advertisements. The problem is greater abroad, where the authority has no jurisdiction.

Union fears scheme may endanger primary staff and standards



Doug McAvoy yesterday, criticising delegates for rejecting reform of the union

Teachers threaten to strike if nursery vouchers cost jobs

By JOHN O'LEARY, EDUCATION EDITOR

NURSERY teachers may be called out on strike if the Government's voucher scheme leads to cuts in their schools, the National Union of Teachers decided yesterday.

The conference gave unopposed backing to a motion threatening strikes if teachers' jobs are endangered or their working conditions worsened after the vouchers are introduced.

Trials of the £1,100 vouchers are to begin in Norfolk and three London boroughs next week, and the scheme is due to go national next year.

Doug McAvoy, the union's general secretary, said the low value of the voucher could force nurseries and primary schools into economies. Industrial action could filter through to whole primary schools.

"Some local authorities might not be able to continue with nursery provision for three-year-olds, as well as possibly losing four-year-old nursery pupils," he said. "Job losses could be anywhere in a school. If it loses nursery places it could mean a school no longer being able to support the salaries of its primary teachers."

worth, one of the London boroughs piloting the scheme, said: "Vouchers are a tax concession to middle-class families who want private education. We also know they are there to motivate big business to build private nurseries and make a profit from something that should be provided free by the Government."

Linda Taffie, from Waltham Forest, east London, said the voucher system had to be stopped quickly. "The philosophy of the market is gradually creeping into schools. We are getting real privatisation."

Mr McAvoy later rounded on militant teachers who on Monday had thrown out reforms designed to give ordinary members more say in the union's affairs. The general secretary predicted that the reforms, which would require conference decisions to be confirmed by membership ballots, would soon be adopted by the union.

"This vote is not a rebuff of me or my views. The voice of the members will be heard and they will insist that their union listens to their views," he said.

After the conference Mr McAvoy said delegates would have to justify ignoring the views of members, who had voted overwhelmingly in favour of the reforms. "I do not believe the executive will want to keep from members of the union the decisions that were taken in their name. It is quite possible that the union will issue to members the breakdown of voting."

Will Reese, convener of the Socialist Teachers Alliance, the leading far-left group at the conference, was unrepentant. "The alliance has always been in favour of encouraging the active involvement of all members in the affairs of the union, and we look forward to constructive dialogue as to how this can be achieved."

In his speech to delegates, Mr McAvoy said that the union would have to be more flexible if it was to be taken seriously by a future government. "If we appear obdurate and devoid of any willingness to consider new ideas, then we will forfeit any right to influence the actions of the next government."

Mr McAvoy said the greatest single advance for teachers would be the establishment of a single union to represent the profession.

Mr McAvoy said the policy of integrating disruptive children into mainstream classes "was creating havoc in schools." Mr de Gruchy said: "We have cases where we authorise our members not to teach children arriving for their first day in nursery school because they are swearing and kicking teachers." He said schools spent too long trying to redress social problems when they should be concentrating on education.

Maggots from infested pigeons fell on pupils' heads

By DAVID CHARTER
EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

MAGGOTS fell on to the heads of children from the dilapidated ceiling of a Bedfordshire school, the National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers was told yesterday.

The problem persisted for several weeks until money was found for repairs at Ashton Middle School in Dunstable, a listed building, the

union's annual conference in Glasgow was told. Ray Mellor, a health and safety officer for the union in Bedfordshire, said the case highlighted the need for rigorous legal standards for school buildings. The conference resolved unanimously to campaign for the reinstatement of the 1981 School Premises Regulations, which were repealed by the Government earlier this year.

Mr Mellor told the conference: "Live maggots were falling from the ceiling on to the children. A dilapidated roof had allowed pigeons to get into the roof space. They couldn't escape so they died, and the blue-bottles did their worst."

He added: "We were able to quote the School Buildings Regulations to the local authority and the school to bring about repairs. Now we could not. The regulations said the roof space had to be waterproof and it was not. Nor should the ceiling have had holes in it." However, the Department for Education and Employment said its circular, which would replace the regulations from September, retained a requirement for the health and safety of pupils to be "reasonably assured". School buildings will still have to "provide reasonable resistance" to rain, snow, wind and damp.

The conference also heard yesterday that violent and emotionally disturbed pupils should be segregated more strictly to raise standards in education. Nigel de Gruchy, the

general secretary, said the policy of integrating disruptive children into mainstream classes "was creating havoc in schools."

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Wife escapes ban over spiked drinks

A WOMAN who admitted driving while over the alcohol limit was given a conditional discharge yesterday after magistrates were told that her estranged husband had spiked her soft drink.

Michaela Kerr thought she had been drinking bitter lemon when she went to fetch a late-night snack for her son. But her husband Donald, who had put alcoholic lemonade in her drink, called the police after she set off without lights.

Yesterday Mrs Kerr, a 27-year-old hairdresser from Newton Abbot, Devon, who admitted being twice over the limit, was spared a driving ban or penalty points after magistrates in the town were told that two glasses of cider which she admitted drinking earlier in the evening would

not have put her over the limit. Anthony Goddard, for Mrs Kerr, said: "The police had been tipped off by what I would say was the husband from hell. She did not know she had been drinking."

Dr Jill Diprose, the magistrate, told her: "Given the fraught domestic situation you were in we believe you did not know or suspect the drink had been laced."

At a previous hearing Mrs Kerr told how she had a series of rows with her husband. Mr Kerr, 30, said: "I saw her go out without lights and with the child in the car. I tried to stop her but she went on so I phoned the police."

Chief constables will today debate giving breath tests to every driver involved in an accident attended by police.

Visitors flock to historic sets of Austen film

THE film *Sense and Sensibility* caused a surge in Easter visitors to National Trust properties used for the production (Kate Alderson writes).

Saltram House in Devon, which portrays the Dashwood family home, where Emma Thompson's character lived, had to introduce a timed-ticket system for the first time. The George III mansion attracted 500 visitors on Good Friday, twice last year's figure. Numbers also almost doubled on Easter Day and Monday, to about 600 people.

Mompesson House in Wiltshire, the setting for Mrs Jennings's London townhouse, recorded a 15 per cent rise during the first ten days since reopening.

DUNBLANE PUBLIC INQUIRY NOTICE OF PRELIMINARY HEARING

The Hon. Lord Cullen, a Senator of the College of Justice in Scotland, who has been appointed by the Secretary of State for Scotland to conduct an Inquiry under the Tribunals of Inquiry (Evidence) Act 1921 relating to the incident at Dunblane Primary School on 13 March 1996 which resulted in the deaths of 18 people, will hold a preliminary hearing at 10.30 am on 1 May 1996 within the Albert Halls, Albert Place, Dumbarton Road, Stirling.

The purpose of the hearing is to deal with matters of representation and procedure in advance of the full Inquiry at which evidence will be heard. The full Inquiry will be held in the Albert Halls, starting on a date to be later announced.

Lord Cullen may authorise the representation at the Inquiry of those who appear to him to be interested persons. Accordingly, all those who seek such authorisation should attend the hearing, either personally or by a legal representative. It will also be helpful if they would make their intentions known to the clerk to the Inquiry, Mrs Glynis McKeand, at Parliament House, Edinburgh EH1 1RQ (Tel: 0131 225 2595; Fax: 0131 220 3460) by 24 April 1996.

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THE film *Sense and Sensibility* caused a surge in Easter visitors to National Trust properties used for the production (Kate Alderson writes).

Saltram House in Devon, which portrays the Dashwood family home, where Emma Thompson's character lived, had to introduce a timed-ticket system for the first time. The George III mansion attracted 500 visitors on Good Friday, twice last year's figure. Numbers also almost doubled on Easter Day and Monday, to about 600 people.

Mompesson House in Wiltshire, the setting for Mrs Jennings's London townhouse, recorded a 15 per cent rise during the first ten days since reopening.

**DUNBLANE PUBLIC INQUIRY
NOTICE OF
PRELIMINARY HEARING**

The Hon. Lord Cullen, a Senator of the College of Justice in Scotland, who has been appointed by the Secretary of State for Scotland to conduct an Inquiry under the Tribunals of Inquiry (Evidence) Act 1921 relating to the incident at Dunblane Primary School on 13 March 1996 which resulted in the deaths of 18 people, will hold a preliminary hearing at 10.30 am on 1 May 1996 within the Albert Halls, Albert Place, Dumbarton Road, Stirling.

The purpose of the hearing is to deal with matters of representation and procedure in advance of the full Inquiry at which evidence will be heard. The full Inquiry will be held in the Albert Halls, starting on a date to be later announced.

Lord Cullen may authorise the representation at the Inquiry of those who appear to him to be interested persons. Accordingly, all those who seek such authorisation should attend the hearing, either personally or by a legal representative. It will also be helpful if they would make their intentions known to the clerk to the Inquiry, Mrs Glynis McKeand, at Parliament House, Edinburgh EH1 1RQ (Tel: 0131 225 2595; Fax: 0131 220 3460) by 24 April 1996.

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Prognosis for injured footballer whose leg is his livelihood



David Busst leaving the pitch on Monday

THE graphic picture in *The Times* of the tackle that snapped David Busst's tibia and fibula and left the lower third of his leg hanging limply with the bones protruding showed that even the legs of a Premiership defender are vulnerable to an unfortunate combination of stresses and strains. The nature of the forces involved in a collision determines the pattern of any resultant fracture.

Mr Busst's fracture is described as compound, the technical term for an open fracture in which the broken ends of the bones have penetrated through the soft tissue, the muscle and the skin, and are left exposed to the air and possible infection. Compound fractures more commonly affect the bones of the lower third of the leg than any other bones in the body. The amount of pain felt by the victim is often intense, but is sometimes, surprisingly, not as great as expected, as the body produces its own opium-type drug, the endorphins, when injury is associated with drama and excitement. Years ago I was called to a road accident in Norfolk in which a farm worker had been thrown from his car. The bones of his leg were not only protruding through the skin but had also gone through his high, hobnailed boots. As I loaded my syringe with a hefty dose of morphine he smiled and said: "You



MEDICAL BRIEFING

Dr Thomas Stuttford

don't have to bother with that, I hardly feel anything." The treatment of fractures of the lower third of the leg has changed over the past 20 years. Earlier many fractures of the shaft of the tibia were treated conservatively: the fracture was reduced so that the bones were well aligned, the leg was put in plaster and a prayer was offered that the

ends would unite. All too often union did not occur and, if it did, it was only after months of immobilisation. Later it was found that faster union was achieved if plates and screws joined the broken ends of the bones and held them in position. Now the tendency is to resort to internal fixation of the fracture by using a rod inserted

into the medulla of the bone. The medulla is a soft centre of a long bone, where the marrow is found. Surgeons have shown that after an intramedullary rod has been fitted, and screwed into position, the bones unite faster and the soft tissue heals more readily. Injury to the soft tissue often involves the blood vessels too. Possible arterial damage is always an important factor to consider in serious fractures of the tibia and fibula, such as Mr Busst sustained. For this reason it has been recommended that victims of these fractures should always be treated in a unit where orthopaedic and plastic surgeries can co-oper-

ate, as the blood supply to the limb has often to be repaired as well as the fracture fixed. In Mr Busst's case, as after all severe fractures, there is always a worry that the bone ends will fail to join. Likewise there is a danger, however carefully the wound has been cleaned and non-viable tissue removed, of infection: embolism, too, is a hazard either from small clots of blood or from little pieces of fat from the medulla. These emboli can be carried to the lungs. The use of intramedullary rods has increased the amount of fat emboli produced. Fortunately, few of the emboli are large enough to cause the sort of trouble which recently afflicted one

of the victims of the Dunblane shooting. If all goes well, Mr Busst will be disabled for about six months. A footballer's legs are precision machinery and nobody can yet predict whether his leg will ever be as good as it was. As one surgeon said: "Most people would just be relieved that they didn't have to have an amputation, as often happened in the past, and can look forward to having a serviceable leg, but it's quite different for a footballer. His right leg is his livelihood and his criteria of a good result will be very different from other people's."

Future for Busst, page 48

Helpline opens to save doctors from drink and drugs

By DOMINIC KENNEDY, SOCIAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

THE British Medical Association opened a 24-hour counselling service yesterday to help doctors to deal with stress and discourage them from turning to drugs or alcohol.

Seven out of ten general practitioners and hospital doctors surveyed by the BMA said they had suffered from work-related stress. Of those, 21 per cent had contemplated suicide and 4 per cent said they had misused drugs, probably tranquillisers or sleeping agents.

Nearly two out of five suffered a loss of libido, 70 per cent had trouble sleeping and nearly 35 per cent had physical illnesses including migraine, back pain, irritable bowel syndrome and peptic ulcers.

Steve Hajioff, of the BMA junior doctors' committee, said: "Clearly there is a significant sign of major psychiatric illness within the medical profession, which must be addressed by both employers and the Health Department as a matter of urgency."

"Suicidally depressed doctors do not deliver a good service to patients and do not deliver an efficient service."

The survey of 800 doctors by the BMA magazine *News Review* disclosed a deeply un-

happy profession. Almost one in nine believed that patients had been encouraged to make unreasonable demands and the same proportion said the profession faced greater stress at work than five years ago. Two thirds welcomed the idea of a doctors' counselling service.

Of those who had suffered from stress, 91 per cent said it was caused by work pressure and 70 per cent believed it adversely affected their work.

One doctor blamed stress for a stroke which left him temporarily paralysed and unable to speak. Another, who appeared to be a hard-working competent professional, had spent £20,000 on therapy while continuing to work. He estimated he was working a 70-hour week after a 300 per cent increase in referrals to his child and family psychiatry practice.

Sandy Macara, chairman of the BMA, said: "A proper degree of stress is healthy and normal: without it many of us would not get out of bed in the morning. What concerns us is that the levels of stress that doctors have to face are excessive, and the causes are worrying. It is intolerable for doctors

to be told which patients to give priority to on the basis of where the money is.

"Added to this is the irresponsible way the Government has heightened expectations of patients, which has led to the so-called complaints culture. It doesn't guarantee higher standards, but it is the best guarantee of demoralising and alienating those who are doing their best in difficult circumstances."

Dr Macara blamed the Government's health reforms. "Almost 90 per cent of people perceived that their levels of stress were greater than five years ago. It is no coincidence that we are about to celebrate the fifth anniversary of the NHS reforms."

Mac Armstrong, secretary of the BMA, said of the high level of suicidal feelings: "This may be dramatic but doctors recognise suicidal thoughts as part of depression."

The General Medical Council issued guidelines in October 1995 encouraging doctors to blow the whistle on colleagues whose work might be affected by alcohol or drug abuse. Doctors should report colleagues to their employers or a regulatory body.



Fiona Cottam, from the virology department at St Thomas's Hospital in London, conducting an HIV retest

Cleared patients seek second HIV test

THOUSANDS of people who have had Aids tests contacted clinics and surgeries reopening yesterday after the Easter holiday to find out whether they could have been given the wrong results. Up to 20,000 people have been tested for HIV with one type of kit which has occasionally shown negative for people known to be positive.

Aids charities brought in extra staff over the weekend to deal with worried callers. Susie Parsons, executive direc-

tor of London Lighthouse, said its helpline took more than 6,000 calls.

The Terrence Higgins Trust said people should still have confidence in HIV testing techniques despite the discovery of a flaw in one type of kit. Nick Partridge, the chief executive, said: "The system is reliable and this incidence of error involves only a small number of people who have tested in a particular way and shown as negative when they were positive." The NHS has

been using the testing kit, made by Abbott Laboratories of Chicago, over the past six months. About two million kits were sold before the company withdrew them.

The Department of Health has estimated that 20,000 Abbott tests were carried out in Britain between September 27 and the end of March. A spokeswoman for the Public Health Laboratory Service said only two errors had been detected in this country.

Medicinal gum patch delivers a quick cure

By NIGEL HAWKES
SCIENCE EDITOR

INSTEAD of swallowing pills, patients may soon be sticking them to the gum behind their top lip. The "Post-It Pill" delivers drugs directly to the bloodstream more efficiently than a skin patch, more easily than an injection and more reliably than swallowing.

A specially developed glue sticks a patch the size of a small tablet to the upper gum. Remaining in place for up to 24 hours, it delivers a steady supply of the active agent to the bloodstream in a pattern closer to the body's own rhythms. The patient can remove it any time, stopping the treatment.

So far the patch, called Cydot and developed by 3M Pharmaceuticals, has been tested with three drugs: melatonin to aid sleep in the elderly; buprenorphine for pain relief; and heparin, an anti-coagulant given to patients after blood loss.

The trials have shown that the patches can be worn without discomfort, and do not interfere with eating, drinking or sleeping. 3M Pharmaceuticals is working with a number of international pharmaceutical companies to develop new applications for the technology.

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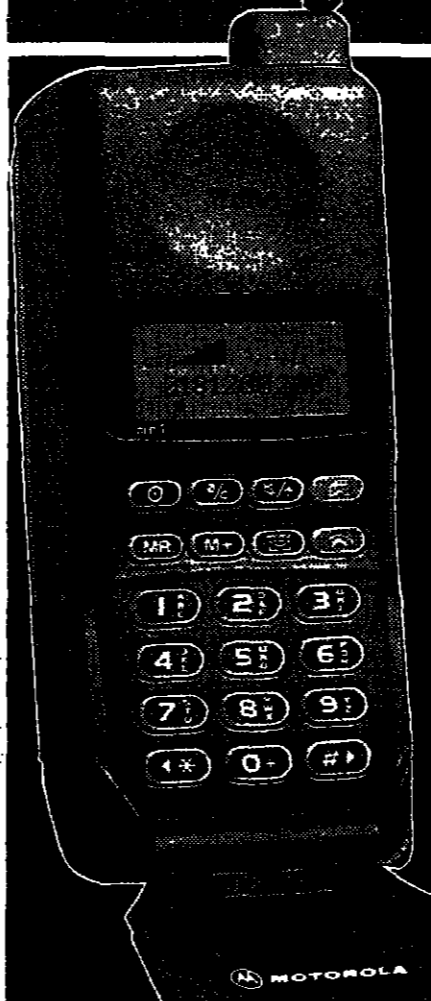


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Clarke's prediction of breakthrough in Staffordshire is undermined by missing 'feel-good' factor

Tories ready to hail defeat by 5,000 votes as election success

By ARTHUR LEATHLEY, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

SENIOR Tories are backing away from Kenneth Clarke's confident forecast of victory in tomorrow's Staffordshire South East by-election and preparing to claim success if the party is defeated by only 5,000 votes.

Tory strategists admit privately that victory is slipping away from them but emphasise that a marginal defeat would indicate public opposition to the Government is falling. After a string of by-election defeats with swings against them of up to 30 per cent, campaigners believe that a swing of 10 per cent can be portrayed as a springboard from which to fight back at the general election.

Tony Blair dismissed the Tory strategy as cynical last night. The Labour leader's senior aides claimed that the Conservatives were attempt-

ing to dress up defeat as victory. In a seat with a 7,192 Tory majority, Conservatives have fought a higher profile campaign than in by-elections in which they have been routed over the past seven years. While campaigners insist that victory is conceivable if wavering Tories vote, they fear that the stay-at-home factor among the disaffected is likely to be critical.

The eve-of-poll mood contrasts with the Chancellor's bullish claims in the constituency last week that Jimmy James, the Tory candidate, was heading towards victory. Mr Clarke said: "I think Jimmy James should be the first beneficiary of the 'feel-good' factor coming back into the Midlands now."

Both main parties recognise that, even if the Tories are defeated, the scale will be

nothing like the 20,694 margin that Labour secured in nearby Dudley West in 1994. But Labour leaders underline that the Staffordshire seat, centred on the expanding and relatively prosperous town of Tamworth, is a solidly Conservative constituency in which a Tory defeat would effectively sound the death knell for a Government reduced to a Commons majority of one.

Mr Blair last night told a public meeting in Tamworth: "A Labour win on Thursday will show there are no no-go areas for new Labour. The Tories know this. They are terrified of losing this seat."

"If we win here, they will not be able to dismiss defeat as mid-term blues or a protest vote. They know that if we win here it will be the clearest sign yet that we are back as the party of the mainstream ma-



Fringe candidate Tony Samuelson, left, confronting Virginia Bottomley and Conservative candidate Jimmy James before being arrested

jority." At a separate public meeting, Michael Heseltine said a Labour government could ruin the prosperity created by the Conservatives.

On the fourth anniversary of his party's general election victory, the Deputy Prime Minister conceded that there

had been unpopular decisions in recent years, especially over raising taxes. "They may at the time have been unpopular decisions. The Conservative Party is not by nature a tax-raising party. But they were the right decisions to ensure that we managed the public

finances effectively and properly funded the public services that look after the old, the sick and the vulnerable."

A fringe candidate was arrested by police yesterday when he tried to address Virginia Bottomley, the Heritage Secretary, as she visited

the constituency. Tony Samuelson, 66, standing for the Daily Loonylugs Party, was held for breach of the peace at Drayton Manor Park.

Mr Samuelson, who opposes the Conservative Party accepting donations from tobacco companies, shouted:

"Where are you, Mrs Bottomley? I want to speak to you." He was later released without charge.

General election 1992: D. L. Lightbown (C) 29,180; B. Jenkins (Lab) 21,988; N. Penlington (Lib Dem) 5,540; majority 7,192.

Trust Labour, Blair to tell US investors

RIDDELL ON POLITICS

Labour government will complete the unfinished agenda of Thatcherism, Tony Blair will tell bankers and businessmen in New York when he arrives in America later today on a three-day trip to raise his international profile.

Mr Blair's visit, his first to America since he became Labour leader in July 1994, is intended both to strengthen his foreign policy credentials and to offer reassurance to overseas investors that Labour has changed its attitude to business since the 1970s and 1980s.

In a speech to the British-American Chamber of Commerce tomorrow, Mr Blair will argue that a Labour government would welcome international investment and would strongly oppose protectionist measures. His theme will be that there will be continuity in policies towards business, as well as change to improve long-term industrial performance.

Labour will seek to build on Thatcherism, not try to reverse it, he will say. The Thatcher Governments did two things right, he will argue: reviving a spirit of enterprise and creating a legal framework for the operations of trade unions. But they failed to reform welfare, to get government and industry working together or to transform education, training and skills.

Consequently, reform of welfare and of education and training would be priorities for a Labour government. Mr Blair will argue that a closer partnership between government and industry would not mean a return to the days of the corporate state and trade union influence over government policies.

Mr Blair will argue that the healthiest relationship between America and Britain is one where London has strong influence in Brussels and within the European Union.

In New York, Mr Blair will meet business and publishing leaders and make his main speech of the trip. In Washington he will meet President

Clinton, Vice-President Gore, other prominent Democrats and media stars. Some details of the programme may have to be revised in view of the funeral today of Ron Brown, the US Commerce Secretary, who was killed in a plane crash in Croatia last week. Other funerals of those killed will be later in the week.

For the British audience, the aim is to boost Mr Blair's international credibility, showing him addressing large business audiences, being feted by leading Democrats and on friendly terms with the American President. The British media will, however, also be concerned with tomorrow's by-election in Staffordshire South East, but Labour is confident that the impact of the trip will be enhanced rather than undermined by a big victory there.

Mr Blair has already become better known in America, through extensive advance publicity. After a profile of Mr Blair in *The New Yorker* earlier this year, there were interviews or profiles over last weekend in several newspapers and flustering profiles in *People* and *Business Week* magazines. Mr Blair is due to meet senior newspaper editors and be interviewed on network television.

The meeting with Mr Clinton on Friday morning will largely be a courtesy, accorded to the main opposition leaders of all Western democracies. The two were said by advisers to have got on well during their only lengthy talk in London, in late November, when they discussed the prospects for centre-left parties.

There is none of the anxiety on the Labour leader's side which preceded both the visits to Washington by Neil Kinnock. The first, in March 1987, was a public relations disaster as the Reagan White House treated him brusquely. In July 1990, elaborate precautions were taken to ensure that the visit to President Bush went smoothly, if blandly.

PETER RIDDELL

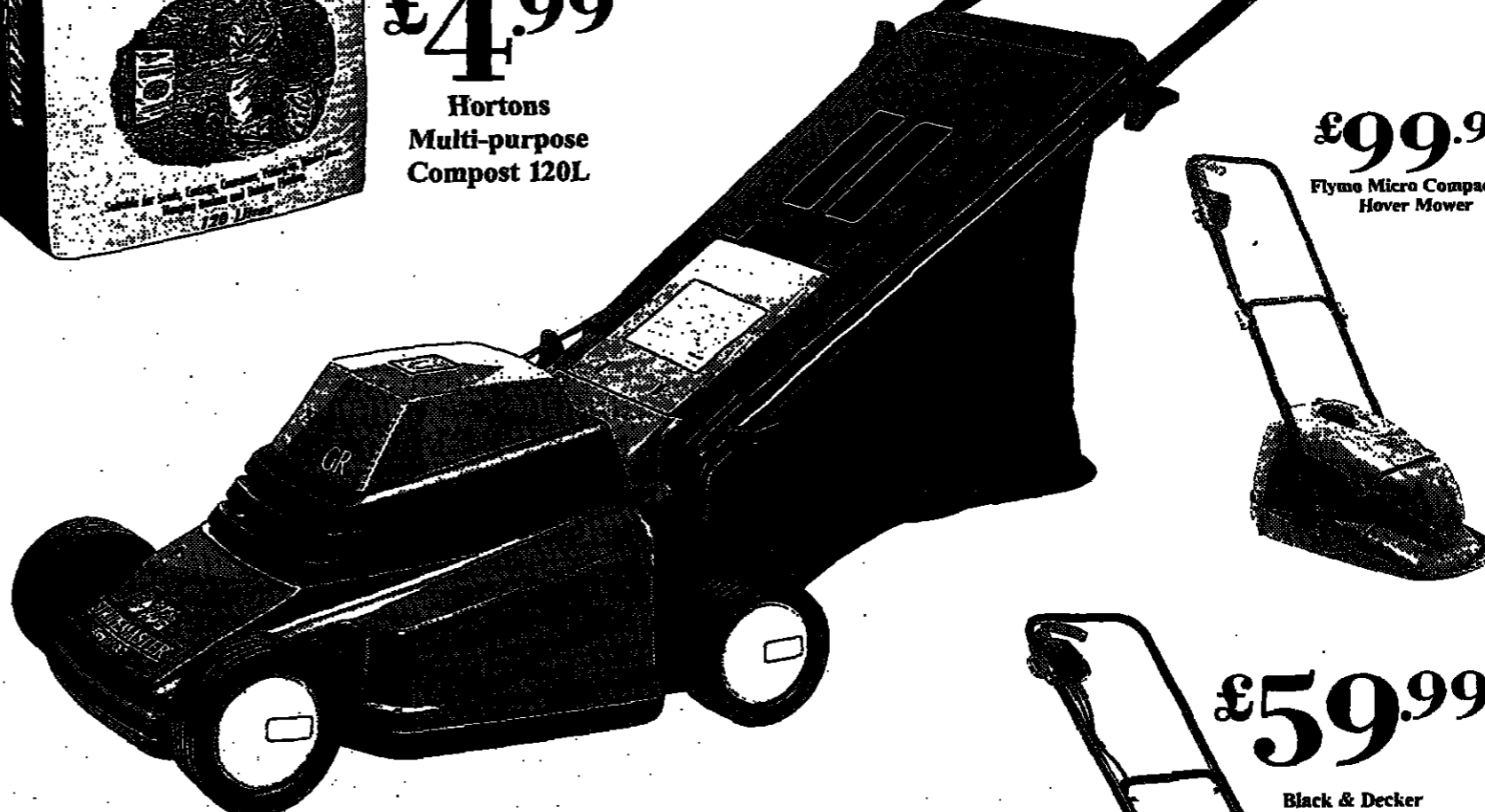
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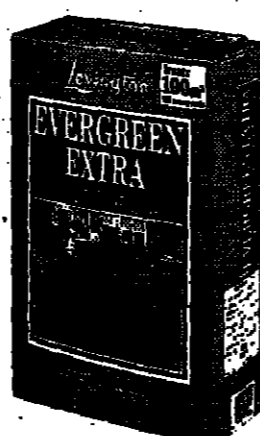


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Ayckbourn stages a dream come true in house of cards

■ Scarborough's £5.2 million theatre has been 30 years in the making. Paul Wilkinson met the playwright who was determined to fulfil the ultimate ambition of his dying mentor

ALAN AYCKBOURN vividly remembers the time 30 years ago when he sat at the bedside of his dying mentor Stephen Joseph, cutting up pieces of card to shape their dream theatre.

This month the dream becomes reality when the playwright opens the Stephen Joseph Theatre in Scarborough. The £5.2 million project in the North Yorkshire resort is the high point of an unlikely connection between the town and the stage which began in the 1950s when Joseph, a theatre iconoclast, introduced holiday-makers to what was then an avant-garde notion of putting the stage in the centre of the audience. What began as an auditorium in a flock wall-papered concert hall above the town library has evolved into a state-of-the-art complex.

"Stephen would be thrilled by all this," said Ayckbourn as technicians scurried about the converted 1930s art deco Odeon cinema. The building now contains a 400-seat in-the-round theatre and a 165-seat end stage which doubles as a cinema, as well as bars, a restaurant, and a drama bookshop.

Ayckbourn, who lives in Joseph's magnificent old house over-

looking Scarborough Harbour, said: "He had an incredible influence on me but so few people know who he was, yet he left this enormous legacy. There are open stages across the country as a result of this extraordinary man in a beanie hat, leather trousers and large boots, who was the scourge of the theatre establishment. He was hated by them. Ken Tynan loathed him. He presented a threat."

"I remember letters Joseph wrote to the papers when he said everyone ought to be Communists, which was then the most awful word you could call anyone. He said he didn't want to play the National Anthem at the end of the show. After that act of blasphemy I was trembling with excitement but he was absolutely right."

Joseph, the son of the actress Hermione Gingold and the publisher Michael Joseph, was a charismatic figure whose enthusiasm infected everyone who met him.

His death from cancer in 1967, at the age 39, set in motion a chain of events which ensured his ideas came to fruition. Ayckbourn, who



Stephen Joseph Theatre in the Round
SCARBOROUGH

Alan Ayckbourn: "Our unlikely location is nice." The new theatre, above

the stage instead of swinging dangerously from ladders. "It is such a simple thing," said Ayckbourn. "Everyone wants to come and see it. The whole Cottesloe team from the National booked a coach to come up." Ayckbourn has put £400,000 of his own money into the scheme. There has been a £1.5 million handout from the National Lottery and donations of pound coins from local pensioners.

Ayckbourn is not daunted by the isolation of Scarborough from the rest of the theatre world. "We used to be out on a limb, but I don't know any more. Our unlikely location is rather nice."

had left his job as a stage manager for the BBC in Leeds, returned as artistic director and found a ready outlet for his burgeoning talents as a playwright. He said: "I inherited a theatre by default, and it was only later I realised I had fallen on my feet. I had this wonderful clear road to a writing career. There was

no middle man telling me it was not suitable."

It is now an unwritten rule that all his plays are premiered in Scarborough. In 1976, the theatre moved to larger premises in a converted school, but when Rank closed its town centre cinema in 1992 Ayckbourn realised the op-

portunity had arrived to assemble those pieces of card he and Joseph had so often shuffled.

"As far as I am concerned, this is our final resting place, not just for the rest of my time here but, if we make the right decisions, for future generations. The result is very exciting. It is as near as I can

dream of having it right."

The stage is hydraulically controlled so that it can be lowered to below-auditorium level where pre-assembled sets can be pushed into place. There is also the first lighting rig of its type in the country, where electricians can set lights from a mesh suspended over

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Certain merchandise not available at all stores.

Hi-fi potato tweeters on edge of new era in sound

By NICK NUTTALL

GOLF tees, pens and parts of stereo systems will soon be made from potato, researchers said yesterday.

British scientists have genetically engineered tubers to produce new types of starch that can be turned into environmentally friendly plastics. The research has also developed substances for thickening or texturing foods, including an alternative to gelatin, a subject of concern over BSE.

Dr Alison Smith, of the John Innes Centre in Norwich, whose research is funded by the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council, said yesterday: "One of these starches forms a strong gel when cooked and could substitute for gelatin."

"At the moment it is not quite as gummy as jelly babies, but it is perfectly possible to make starch gels for sweets."

Dr Smith added: "Petroleum, from which plastics are made, comes from a finite resource. In contrast potatoes are a renewable resource. Starch-based plastics are also in general biodegradable."

The starches are expected to be on the North American market next year.

Attempt to save pilot beset by problems

By A STAFF REPORTER

AIRLINE crew and medical staff fighting to save a captain who collapsed during a holiday flight ran into a series of problems, according to the official report on the incident.

Roger Attenborough slumped unconscious as he prepared to land a 220-passenger Britannia Airways Boeing 757 at Malaga airport in southern Spain on January 28. His co-pilot managed to land the aircraft safely, but Captain Attenborough, a 54-year-old father of two, was declared dead at a local hospital.

An Air Accident Investigation Branch inquiry found that a nurse summoned from her passenger seat could not be strapped into the jump seat to attend to the captain, while the position of his seat made it impossible for her to get into the left observer's seat.

Having declared an emergency, the co-pilot could not land first time because the approach he was given triggered off a ground proximity warning system alert. When the plane was able to land, a waiting paramedic could not board for two or three minutes as the steps had not arrived.

The report said the captain "died during or shortly after the flight".

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Scientists believe galaxy could be full of unseen stars up to 60 times the size of Jupiter

Brown dwarf find advances theory of missing mass

By NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR

THE elusive brown dwarf, pursued by astronomers for decades, has been found living quietly on its own in the Milky Way.

Too big to be a planet but too small to be a sun, the brown dwarf is the star that fails to glitter. But it could help solve one of the great mysteries of cosmology if it proves to be abundant enough to account for the "missing mass", which astronomers are certain exists in the universe but which they have been unable to identify.

At the National Astronomy Meeting in Liverpool today, Dr Mike Hawkins of the Royal Observatory in Edinburgh will describe observations of six brown dwarfs.

Four of the stars are within 150 light years of the Sun, which makes them local in astronomical terms. Unlike brown dwarfs that have been identified previously, they are not part of binary systems or clusters, but sit alone and palely loiter among the ordinary stars of the Milky Way.

Brown dwarfs are objects that may be 60 times as big as the planet Jupiter, but only

one-fifteenth the mass of the Sun. They are too cool to set off the nuclear reactions that make the Sun and other stars of its type so hot and bright.

Dr Hawkins and Dr Hugh Jones of Liverpool John Moores University have studied images taken by a British telescope in Australia and analysed in Edinburgh using a computerised system for studying images of the sky. They were looking for objects that appeared red, the signature of small, failed stars. Using the computer, they laid 100 images of the same area of sky on top of one another and the stars that had been invisible on the individual images slowly emerged. They red images could be seen moving against the background of more distant stars. The fact that they are apparently moving gives the clue that they must be close.

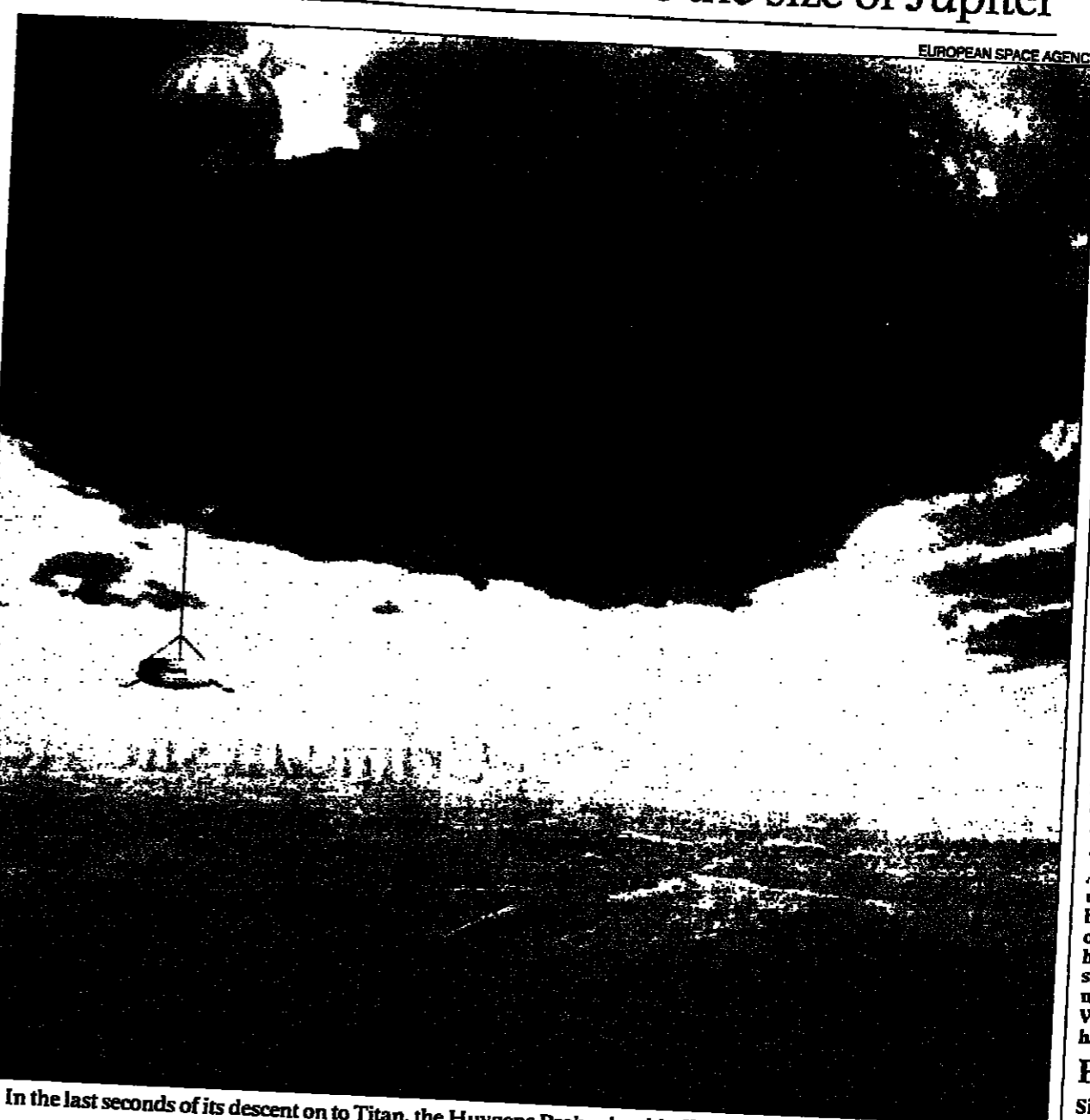
With the help of astronomers from Bordeaux Observatory, the distances were measured by using the amount of motion as a guide. They showed that of the six brown dwarfs identified, four are located among the stars of the Milky Way. This means

that they can be only brown dwarfs, because regular stars cannot be this faint. Dr Hawkins says that they shine 100,000 times more dimly than the Sun.

"It was a fantastic feeling to watch the stars gradually appearing out of the blackness," he said. "In the end it all seemed too simple, just laying the images on one another, but sometimes the simple plans work best."

The discovery of four brown dwarfs in our own backyard, so to speak, suggests that there may be many more both in our galaxy and in others. If so, they could account for a substantial fraction of the missing mass known to be present in galaxies but currently undetectable.

Dr Hawkins said: "I am confident in saying these are the first bona fide brown dwarfs to be found. It seems natural now to assume the entire galaxy will be filled with these stars, and there must be one far closer to Earth, possibly within one light year. Now we may soon be able to work out what missing matter really is, and the importance of that is huge."



In the last seconds of its descent on to Titan, the Huygens Probe should offer unprecedented views of Saturn

Amphibious probe to unlock mysteries of Saturn's giant moon

By NIGEL HAWKES

A PROBE designed to splash, or crash, on to the surface of Saturn's largest moon is being assembled for launch next year.

The Huygens Probe is aimed at Titan, one of the most intriguing objects in the solar system. Astronomers believe that Titan may have oceans

filled with liquid methane, swept by huge waves and with methane icebergs floating around. But the surface is swathed in a thick orange fog, obscuring what lies below.

Dr John Zarnecki, of the University of Kent, told the National Astronomy Meeting in Liverpool yesterday that there was no means of knowing where the probe would

land, so it had to be designed to work on dry land or on the surface of the ocean. His team has designed the Surface Science Package, one of six instruments to be carried by Huygens, which will parachute to the surface early next century after being released from the Cassini orbiter.

Huygens is designed to touch down on Titan at a

speed of about 20mph. The package will operate during the 2½-hour descent and for about half an hour thereafter. One of the things it will measure is the amount of "bounce" should it land on terra firma, since that can reveal a lot about the nature of the terrain.

It will also measure temperature and conductivity,

and a sonar will plumb the depths of the oceans should the arrival be wet. Measurements of the refractive index of any liquid it encounters will give a clear idea what it is, as will measurements of the speed of sound.

What Dr Zarnecki calls an electronic spirit level will measure tilt, which could be interesting if the probe is floating. Titan's gravity is 15 per cent of Earth's and, with the expected strong winds, there could be huge waves.

Astronomers believe that Titan's temperature is about -170C, close to the temperature where liquid, gaseous and solid methane can coexist. This means that there may be

methane icebergs floating on the oceans.

Titan is a huge moon, larger than Mercury, and was first discovered by the astronomer Christian Huygens in 1655. The probe is a project of the European Space Agency and is due for launch aboard the American Cassini spacecraft in October next year. It will take nearly seven years to reach Saturn, with the help of gravity "assist" from Venus (twice), Earth and Jupiter.

Huygens is expected to be released by Cassini on November 6, 2004, and will enter Titan's atmosphere later that month. Once it lands, it will have 30 minutes to send information to the orbiter

before it is overcome by falling batteries, the bitter cold, impact damage or the orbiter disappearing over the horizon.

The success of the American Galileo mission to Jupiter, which took almost as long, reassures the astronomers that the instruments will work for seven years. Further tests are planned before it is launched to ensure that it can withstand the shocks of space-flight and the cold.

"We don't have an absolute guarantee that it will survive the landing," Dr Zarnecki admits, but a flight test in northern Sweden last year worked well. The probe was intact after landing and transmitted data successfully.

NHS pays for sister's surrogacy

The sister of a woman born without a womb has been accepted by the NHS as a surrogate mother. Treatment has started on both women, who approached doctors five months ago, according to a support group.

The news came as details emerged of Britain's first baby born to a stand-in mother on the NHS. Jack Wells, who is almost two, was born after York District Health Authority paid £5,000 to implant his mother's eggs into a surrogate.

Scots calling falls
The number of people applying to become ministers in the Church of Scotland has fallen by 30 per cent, from 108 in 1994 to 76 last year. Candidates accepted for the Presbyterian ministry fell from 161 in 1993 to 129 in 1994 and 105 last year.

Dog savages boy
A six-year-old boy will have to undergo plastic surgery after his nose was nearly ripped off by a bull mastiff near his home in Billinge, Merseyside. Marlon Aker had the nose stitched back on at Whiston hospital and the dog has been destroyed.

Police chief quits
Sir Ron Hadfield, Chief Constable of West Midlands Police, is to retire in July. Sir Ron, 56, head of the largest regional force in England for six years, recently called for the start of trials of CS spray and the introduction of national identity cards.

Legal go-ahead
The widow of a lung cancer victim was cleared to continue her test case against Imperial Tobacco. The Court of Session, Edinburgh, rejected the firm's demand for £2 million costs now from Margaret McTear, of Beith.

Bottom brief
Police searching for a man found him naked in an airing cupboard after he cried out when he burst in bottom on the boiler. The man, 33, from Southampton, received hospital treatment after being bailed by magistrates.



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Former Italian premier in court

Andreotti goes on trial for ordering death of journalist

FROM PHILIP WILLAN IN PERUGIA

THE MURDER trial of Giulio Andreotti, the former Italian Prime Minister, begins tomorrow in a fortified courtroom near this picturesque Umbrian hilltop town.

The trial is without precedent in the industrialised world for the gravity of the charge and the eminence of the defendant, who was seven times Prime Minister, and probably the best-known face of Italy on the international stage in the past half century. If he was not having to defend himself against charges of murder and involvement with the Mafia, the 77-year-old former Christian Democrat might still be playing the role of elder statesman in Italian politics.

Signor Andreotti is accused of having ordered the murder of Mino Pecorelli, a journalist and editor of *Osservatore Politico*, a well-informed if sometimes scurrilous weekly magazine. Pecorelli was shot dead in a Rome street on March 20, 1979. Prosecutors in Perugia say the killing stopped him carrying out a threat to publish damaging information about Signor Andreotti that might have caused serious harm to his political career. Signor Andreotti became Prime Minister three days after Pecorelli's death.

The trial is a result of the evidence of Tommaso Buscetta, the Mafia supergrass who claimed in 1992 that Pecorelli had been killed by the Mafia as a favour to Signor Andreotti. Signor Buscetta, the best known of Italy's Mafia turncoats, told magistrates that Pecorelli had been eliminated because he was threatening to divulge secrets concerning the Red Brigades' kidnapping and murder the previous year of Signor Andreotti's party colleague Aldo Moro. However, his evidence is hearsay: he claims to have received the information from the two Mafia bosses who allegedly commissioned the assassination.

Accused with Signor Andreotti is Gaetano Badalamenti, the only surviving source of Signor Buscetta's information, who is in an American prison but has expressed a desire to attend the trial.

Also charged are Giuseppe Calo, who worked for the Cosa Nostra in Rome, Claudio Vitalone, a former Rome magistrate and close political associate of Signor Andreotti's, and the two alleged assassins, a Mafioso from Palermo named Michelangelo La Barbera and Massimo Caminati, a right-wing extremist with strong links to the Rome underworld.

The case was moved from Rome to Perugia, which is responsible for investigating offences by Rome magistrates, after a member of a Rome



Andreotti: best known of Italian political leaders



Moro: wrote critically of Andreotti while hostage

crime gang accused Signor Vitalone of having a role in the commissioning of the murder.

Perugia prosecutors say Signor Buscetta's allegations have been backed up by the evidence of other Mafia members and by gangsters from Rome. They say the motive for the journalist's murder lay in information he had obtained about the Moro kidnapping and about a financial relationship between Signor Andreotti and Nino Rovelli, an industrialist and leading contributor to Christian Democrat Party funds.

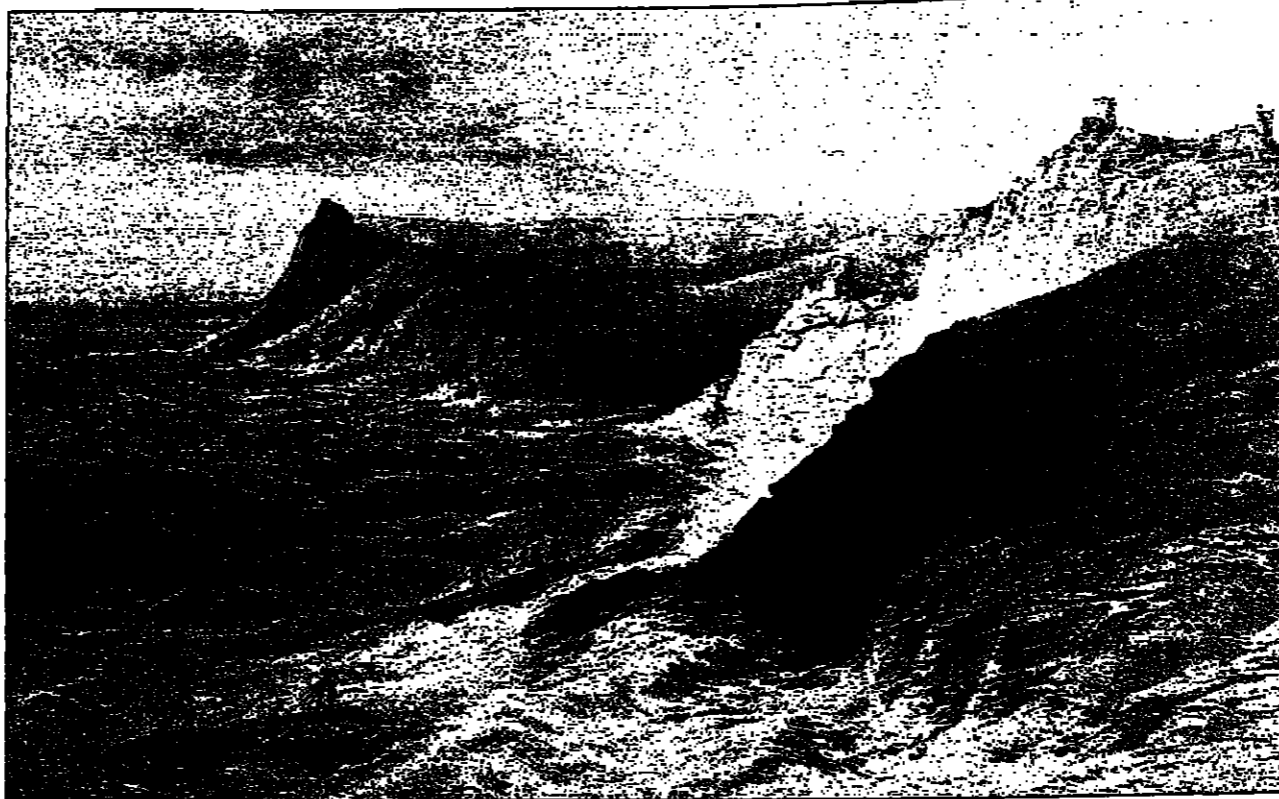
The two elements are linked in a document written by Moro during his 55 days as a hostage of the Red Brigades in which he levelled fierce criticism at Signor Andreotti, in particular for his contacts with controversial figures from the financial world.

Pecorelli's account of the Moro kidnapping was itself unusual. He described it as bearing "the hallmark of a lucid superpower" and said it was intended to prevent the Communist Party from taking the final step "into a direct participation in the government of the country".

Several Mafia witnesses have alleged that Christian Democrat leaders acted to block negotiations that might have led to Moro's release. The case still overshadows Italian political life.

Fausto Cardella, 46, one of the two Perugia prosecutors, said: "We are going to court to see whether the evidence is convincing or not. Andreotti is the Italian politician who is best known abroad but he has been treated in exactly the same way as if his name was Mario Rossi."

Signor Andreotti's lawyer, Franco Coppi, is convinced of his client's innocence and confident he will be able to demonstrate it in court. "We don't want to approach this trial by talking about the manifest absurdity of the charge. We will pretend to take it seriously," he said.



The storm off Balaclava in November 1854 in which about 30 British ships sank with the loss of many lives

Crimean site yields 'British graves'

FROM THOMAS DE WAAL IN MOSCOW

ONE hundred and forty years after the end of the Crimean War, a hillside outside Sebastopol has yielded an undiscovered graveyard that may be the last resting place of shipwrecked British sailors.

The makeshift cemetery, consisting of about 120 graves containing simple wooden coffins, was found last month by local archaeologists on the coast of Cossack Bay on the Kherson peninsula, south-west of Sebastopol, in Ukraine. Yuri Breslavsky, the head of the team, said they

had uncovered nine rows with about fifteen graves in each. Inside the trenches were foreign-made bone and brass buttons and fragments of toothbrushes. He thought it likely the dead were sailors and probably British. "If it had been land infantry we would have expected to find weapons," he said.

The find is a highly unusual one for the Crimea, where most battlefields have already been excavated. The British Embassy in Kiev said if the dead did turn out to be

British, there would be official help for what would be the first reburial ceremony in modern times for Crimean War dead.

Mr Breslavsky hopes to pin down the identities of the bodies when his team digs again at the site later this month. But he speculated that the dead might be victims of the famous storm off the Crimean coast on November 14, 1854. His judgment was endorsed by Andrew Sewell of the Crimean War Research Society. "It sounds plausible

on the face of it that these newly discovered graves would be English sailors or members of the marine brigade, who were based on board the ships," he said.

The storm could not have happened at a worse time for the British fleet, which had put to sea from its cramped harbour at Balaclava after the disaster of the battle of October 25, 1854, famous for the Charge of the Light Brigade. The fleet was devastated by the high winds and about 30 ships went down.

Chernobyl tornado 'spread thyroid cancer'

FROM CAROLINE DREES IN VIENNA

THE Chernobyl catastrophe caused a sharp rise in thyroid cancers and may be linked to leukaemia among workers cleaning up the radioactive fallout, experts told a conference on the world's worst nuclear accident yesterday.

Ten years after a fire and blast at the nuclear plant spewed radiation over much of Europe, 700 delegates, politicians and nuclear experts from around the globe met in Vienna to discuss the long-term impacts of the disaster.

"The Chernobyl incident resulted in a significant increase in thyroid

cancers," said Anatoly Tsyb, of Russia's Medical Radiological Research Centre. A possible link between the fallout and a spate of leukaemias among clean-up workers was particularly worrying.

Leaders from Belorussia, Russia and Ukraine painted a grim picture of the shattered lives and environmental chaos in their countries caused by the Chernobyl explosion on April 26, 1986.

The speakers from the three former Soviet republics most affected by the accident emphasised that cash and technical aid were needed urgently to ease the suffering of thousands of

people in contaminated areas. President Lukashenko of Belorussia said his country had to spend a quarter of its annual budget on dealing with a "radioactive tornado never seen before". About 70 per cent of the fallout was deposited on Belorussia.

The estimated total radioactivity from the blast was 200 times more than that from the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki combined, the World Health Organisation (WHO) said.

The WHO is co-sponsoring the conference with the Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency

and the European Commission. The four-day conference opened with a minute's silence for past, present and future victims of Chernobyl.

Experts at the meeting said that about 54,000 square miles — about the size of Denmark, Belgium, The Netherlands and Switzerland combined — were contaminated.

"The future health effects will be mostly related to children; and psychological issues will remain in the forefront," Professor Fred Mettler, who led an international health assessment team to Chernobyl in 1990, said. (Reuters)

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Dudayev calls for talks with Yeltsin

FRONT RICHARD OWEN IN MOSCOW

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French 'curb rights protest in hope of £1bn Peking deal'

FROM ADAM SAGE IN PARIS

FRANCE was yesterday accused of putting money ahead of human rights as it rolled out the red carpet for Li Peng, the Chinese Prime Minister, who began a four-day state visit.

Three weeks after China's military exercises off Taiwan, the French authorities are hoping to exploit the sharp cooling in Sino-American relations to conclude a series of deals with Mr Li.

The Chinese Prime Minister will meet his French counterpart, Alain Juppé, today and French business leaders believe he will go on to sign contracts worth at least Fr 10 billion (£1.3 billion) during his visit.

Opposition Socialist Party leaders said the Gaullist-led administration had hushed up abuses in China in an attempt to appease Peking. Human rights organisations have been told they cannot demonstrate outside the Chinese Embassy. Instead they will hold a protest a few hundred yards away at the Trocadero square this evening.

Laurent Fabius, the former Socialist Prime Minister, accused the Government of "putting its flag in its pocket". In an article in *Le Monde*, several senior civil servants, whose identities were not disclosed, also criticised the visit.

To invite Mr Li to Paris is to commit a political error and a moral fault at the same time," wrote Mr Li on having massed students (at Tiananmen Square) in order to sell China a third nuclear power station.

The French business community, however, is unlikely to see things in the same light. Mr Li is due at the Airbus headquarters in Toulouse, when he is expected to order 30 A320 planes and three long-haul A340 aircraft. The contract is estimated to be worth £1.1 billion.

Mr Li's visit comes at a time when France is trying to rebuild relations with China that were damaged by the 1992 sale of 60 Mirage fighters to Taiwan. M Juppé's predecessor, Edouard Balladur, went

out of his way to court the Chinese, a policy that has been taken up by President Chirac. Privately, French officials say the stand-off between America and China that followed Peking's decision to stage military manoeuvres near Taiwan last month could work in their favour.

Speaking on French television on Monday, Mr Li said: "We are prepared to accept a dialogue on the problem of human rights but China cannot accept human rights being used to interfere in our internal affairs."

Mr Li's heavy workload had forced him to postpone visits to The Netherlands and Luxembourg, the Chinese Foreign Ministry said last night. A spokesman for the ministry denied reports by a Hong Kong newspaper that the plans to sell submarines to Taiwan. (Reuters)



Admira Ismic, a Muslim, and Bosko Brkic, a Serb — the young lovers whose death in Sarajevo three years ago became a symbol of the Bosnian War

EUROPEAN

Sarajevo r Romeo and Juliet

FROM STACY SULLIVAN IN SARAJEVO

IT WAS in May 1993 that Admira Ismic and Bosko Brkic were shot dead as they tried to flee Sarajevo. She was a Muslim, he a Serb and they wanted to escape the madness of their country.

For eight days the couple lay in a still embrace on Vrbanka Bridge — her arms around him in a tragic symbol of ethnic warfare — before Serb soldiers scooped up their bodies one night and deposited them in a Serb cemetery.

When they died, Admira's father, Zijah Ismic, said, "If will one day be able to bury them together as they lived." Now his wish has come true.

The couple's bodies have been exhumed from their unmarked graves and returned to Sarajevo where they will be buried today in the Lion Cemetery. Mr Ismic said: "He stayed in Sarajevo because of her and she wanted to reward him by leaving with him to the Serb side."

Admira and Bosko met at a Sarajevo café in 1985 at a time when inter-ethnic courtship was normal. They had been together for eight years before they were killed, both aged 25.

Champs-Elysées art exhibition arouses Parisian passions

BY ADAM SAGE

A VAST open-air sculpture exhibition has given the Champs-Elysées in Paris a distinctly off-beat look.

Building on the success of a similar exhibition by the Spanish artist Botero in 1992, Paris town hall has decided to transform the French capital's most famous avenue from now until June. Almost 50 Rodin, Picasso and Henry Moore are in place awaiting the official opening tomorrow.

"We wanted to take art back to the street and therefore to everyone," Solange Auzias de Turenne, who organised the exhibition, said. "We wanted to give as wide a public as possible access to some respected works liked at present by a privileged few."

Even before tomorrow's opening the works have attracted interest and more than a little bewilderment. Drivers, who usually race down the Champs-Elysées, can be seen to slow as they are met by the huge sculptures.

Some tourists have trouble knowing what to make of it all. "I would not like this in my garden," a sightseer said as she peered at a brightly coloured work by the French artist, Niki de Saint-Phalle.

Organisers of the exhibition say it is at night that it will be most spectacular. A lighting system has been created with the sculptures emerging from the darkness to the surprise of passers-by. Jean Tiberi, Mayor of Paris, said he had been motivated by the "desire to make Parisians lose their heads. The desire to surprise them, to seduce them, to invite them to a strange party."

Not everyone has been seduced. Jean-Paul Belmondo, the veteran French film star, said there were not enough Gallic sculptures on show. Accusing M Turenne of "showing a lack of taste", he said the actor said he would not have just come to Paris to see the Champs-Elysées, but to see the beautiful avenue in the world, defaced by the sculptures exhibited by the city of Paris.

His comments may not be entirely objective. He has been criticised that works by his father, Paul, have been left out of the exhibition.



Rodin's 'The Thinker'

Berlusconi pitches for Catholic vote

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN ROME

WITH the Italian election less than two weeks away, the Left reacted angrily yesterday to an open pitch for the Roman Catholic vote by Silvio Berlusconi, the leader of the conservative Forza Italia party.

The question of "who God votes for" has become central to the election since last week when the Italian Bishops' Conference dropped any attempt to instruct Catholics on voting preferences and issued instead a list of values for voters, such as family life, workers' rights, social justice, the environment and peace and solidarity.

The bishops' list was interpreted by the Left as "socialist", but Signor Berlusconi, speaking on one of his own television channels, said Forza Italia was the natural home for Catholics because it believed in "the family, life and the human being". Romano Prodi, leader of the centre-left bloc, retorted that the media tycoon was dishonouring Easter and "using religion as an instrument of political marketing".

The former Prime Minister's remarks also irritated the rump Christian Democratic parties, which are allied with Forza Italia and whose roots and ideology are Catholic. However, Gianfranco Fini, leader of the post-Fascist Alleanza Nazionale, which is increasingly the dominant element in the centre-right bloc, agreed with Signor Berlusconi that the Left had a history of atheism and had no claim to the Catholic vote.

Leftwingers say the Pope's views are socialist, pointing to his Easter message and to a recent speech to factory workers in Siena in which he accused entrepreneurs of "exploiting the free market in pursuit of automatic riches" at the expense of workers.

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Theodore Kaczynski

Suspect's brother put lives before loyalty

By Quentin Letts

THE younger brother of Theodore "Ted" Kaczynski, 53, the suspected Unabomber, wrote to him last autumn, asking to visit him at his remote shack in Montana. Documents have now been found at the shack bearing the names of some of the Unabomber's victims.

David Kaczynski, whose struggle with his conscience is perhaps the most intriguing aspect of the arrest of the prime suspect, wanted discreetly to check his fears that his eccentric brother was the multiple bomber.

A charity worker from New York State, he felt the first stirrings of suspicion last summer after noticing that his elder brother's occasional sorties from Montana bore a similar pattern to the Unabomber's attacks. The two brothers had not met for six years, but Ted sent postcards and letters home.

David Kaczynski's disquiet was accentuated in October when he noticed marked similarities between Ted's writings and the Unabomber's \$5,000-word manifesto, which had been published in national newspapers. At this point, he asked a private investigator to look into the matter. When his request to visit the Montana shack met with a refusal, his suspicions were increased.

Much as Mr Kaczynski may curse the difficulty of the decision he had to make to put the lives of others before family ties and take his suspicions to the FBI, he won praise from Jack Levin, a leading criminologist. "We learn from an early age that you don't tattle," Mr Levin said. "You especially don't tattle on family members. This brother deserves tremendous credit."

The discovery at Mr Kaczynski's shack of documents bearing the names of Unabomber victims has hardened the belief of FBI agents that they have arrested the man who over 18 years conducted a bombing campaign across America that killed three people, but so far he has been charged only with making an explosive device.

First woman White House press secretary complains of 'glass ceiling'

Clinton accused of running club for 'white boys'

FROM IAN BRODIE IN WASHINGTON

DEE DEE MYERS, the first woman White House press secretary, has criticised President Clinton for running a "white boys' club" where women struggle to be heard.

Ms Myers, who resigned in December 1994, has gone public with a complaint increasingly heard privately that a "glass ceiling" exists for women in Mr Clinton's team, except for Hillary Clinton.

They complain that Mr Clinton is more comfortable governing with an inner circle of male advisers, contrary to his rhetoric about the virtues of diversity and of ending gender bias.

If the issue gains national attention it could embarrass Mr Clinton, who is expected to draw more heavily on women than men for support in the election. In fact, he has appointed more women to Cabinet and other top jobs than any previous President. Ms Myers was a case in point. At 31, after a year as the Clinton campaign spokeswoman, she landed the job of White House press secretary.

However, she was not given the office or duties that traditionally go with the post. She was parked in a cubby-hole while George Stephanopoulos, the communications director, occupied the larger office and conducted daily press briefings.

It was Ms Myers' first taste of being pushed into a subservient role. She had far less access to senior officials than her predecessors had and was excluded from high-level

Tokyo: William Perry, the US Defence Secretary, will visit Japan on Sunday and Monday before President Clinton's state visit next week, the Foreign Ministry announced. Mr Perry will hold talks over American bases in Okinawa, where three US servicemen were convicted of raping a girl of 12 last September. (Reuters)

meetings where decisions were made. Nonetheless, when things went wrong, she was frequently the victim of Mr Clinton's flashes of temper, known as "the purple rage".

Ms Myers makes her resentment known in a new book, *Madhouse*, by Jeffrey Birnbaum, a senior political writer for *Time* magazine. His account says that Ms Myers was still out of the inner circle when she took over the briefings from Mr Stephanopoulos. She was not told in advance of Mr Clinton's plans to bomb Baghdad in retaliation for President Saddam Hussein's plot to assassinate George Bush. As a result, she unwittingly gave untruthful answers to reporters' questions — an enormous black mark for a press secretary.

Ms Myers was dismayed during an emergency meeting of the Clinton team called to discuss a dollar crisis. Men sat at the table and women against the wall, including Ms Myers and, to her shock, Laura D'Andrea Tyson, a

financial expert who was chairman of the Economic Advisory Council. Ms Tyson tried several times to say something but men talked over her. She almost had to shout before Mr Clinton called on her to speak, and then largely took her advice.

As Ms Tyson and Ms Myers left, they agreed it was not the first time it had happened and that it would not be the last.

To be fair, after much indecision, Mr Clinton promoted Ms Tyson to a new economic post last year. However, other women working for him remain convinced their ideas do not carry weight.

Alice Rivlin, the budget director, wanted to compromise on a balanced budget but was overruled. Donna Shalala, Health Secretary, lost control of healthcare reform. Hazel O'Leary, the Energy Secretary, is derided as ineffectual. Carol Browner, head of the Environmental Protection Agency, defers to Al Gore, the Vice-President, on policy.

Janet Reno, the Attorney-General, lacks the presidential trust of her male predecessors. Several women have left in frustration. So has Ms Myers, now co-host of a TV programme about politics. Her position was even less tenable after Leon Panetta became White House Chief of Staff and ignored her. She and Mr Clinton had a heart-to-heart talk during which they cried and said they loved each other. She stayed only long enough to resign with dignity.



Dee Dee Myers, who felt the President excluded women from his circle of advisers

Reporters liked her, but felt she had insufficient intellect for the job. She was replaced by Mike McCurry, white and male, whose basic condition was one she never had: unfettered access to the President.

Wider powers: Mr Clinton last night ratified legislation that will give the President more control over items included in the federal budget. The fresh air of public accountability will blow through

the federal budget," the President said after signing the Bill. The so-called line-item veto will come into effect in January, after the inauguration of the President elected in November. (AFP)

American children switch screens

FROM QUENTIN LETTS IN NEW YORK

AMERICAN children are watching five hours' less television a week than they did in the 1980s, according to new figures. Research found that youngsters aged two to 11 sit in front of the television for an average of 21 hours, 38 minutes a week.

A decade ago the figure was more than 26 hours a week. The 18 per cent drop is attributed to increased use of computers, videotapes and, perhaps, an increased awareness among parents of the "time-wasting" potential of television. Despite the drop in average watching times, however, television remained the biggest single activity for children, far more than sport, books or other forms of play.

The watching figures were reported by Nielsen Media Research, which also monitors audience figures for television companies and advertisers. The drop in viewing times will be a cause for concern within the industry as it may threaten the ability of television to provide advertisers

a mass market. Some companies have already accommodated the change, and now market their products on computer online services and elsewhere.

Audrey Guskey, a marketing analyst at Pittsburgh School of Business Administration, said yesterday: "Children certainly are watching less television. Technology has expanded to allow more creativity. It is very good news for society, although in some instances we are going from one evil to what a lot of people consider to be another evil."

Families are monitoring television habits more, she said, and sometimes prefer videotapes because they can be selected by parents and pre-screened for undesirable material. "Modern parents have grown up with television and know what a time waster it can be. Children are moving in the right direction," Ms Guskey said. Children's television viewing reached its peak in 1984, when

American youngsters spent more than 26 hours a week watching programmes. In 1988 they were still devoting the equivalent of a whole day a week to the television, but the figures then dropped steeply with the development of computer entertainment and the Internet. It may also be that the viewing slump has something to do with the woe of quality of some shows.

Business executives have a saying that "advertising follows the eyeballs", and consequently some firms now reserve part of their promotional budgets for media other than television. Jane Dukes, a marketing manager for the fast food chain McDonald's, said: "We have to innovate, be relevant and stay contemporary." Her company, much of whose business comes from children, now chases those eyeballs down computer lines and cable television outlets specialising in children's entertainment.

Killer apologises to prostitutes' families

By Quentin Letts

A CONFESSED murderer of prostitutes who dismembered his victims and dumped their bodies in New York rubbish bins apologised to the families of the women he killed, and said that he felt "horrible".

Robert Shulman, a 42-year-old post office sorter, whimpered as he was led to a police car in Patchogue, Long Island. He confessed to killing five young women since 1991.

Shulman, whose 37-year-old brother is also being questioned by police in connection with the murders, would drive to a notorious pick-up spot for prostitutes and take them back to his flat. There, after sex and drugs, he would beat

them to death using a hammer, baseball bat or his gymnastic weights. He disposed of the bodies in bins around Long Island, having first chopped off the women's arms.

Police finally tracked down one of the victims from a tattoo on her body. From there the investigation moved swiftly, for Shulman and his cruising blue Cadillac were familiar to the local prostitutes. The Shulman brothers were known in the area as odd but rarely talked to neighbours.

Prosecutors would not say if they intend to press for the death penalty for the killings reminiscent of Jack the Ripper under the state's recently altered punishment laws.

Rockets injure 26 Israelis

Jerusalem: At least 26 Israeli citizens were wounded yesterday when Islamic guerrillas fired Katyusha rockets at a Jewish settlement along the northern border with Lebanon (Ross Dunn writes).

The attack, after a landmine explosion killed a Lebanese youth, 17, has raised fears that the conflict in south Lebanon could worsen.

Hezbollah guerrillas fired two salvos on Kiryat Shmona and one rocket made a direct hit on a block of flats. Israel retaliated immediately, using air force jets, artillery and heavy tank fire to blast suspected hideouts of Hezbollah fighters.

Sharjah sheikh dies of stroke

Dubai: A member of Sharjah's Royal Family has died of a stroke three weeks after he was injured when a firecracker hit him during an international football match in the United Arab Emirates. Sheikh Mohammed bin Khaled al-Qasbi died in Britain, where he was undergoing plastic surgery on his ear, which had been ripped off by the firecracker. (AFP)

British tie cut

Wellington: New Zealand moved to sever another British tie, with plans to abolish the right of appeal to the Privy Council. The next election is also to be held by proportional representation. (Reuters)

Overtime plea

Tokyo: Takamitsu Nagai, Japan's Labour Minister, said employers had been asked to protect workers from death from overwork, by reducing overtime. Last year 76 people died of overwork. (AFP)

Keys to faith

Tehran: An Iranian religious scholar has designed software that will call Muslim computer users to prayer five times a day. Haj Samimi spent a year developing the programme to ensure its accuracy. (AFP)

Killer beheaded

Delhi: A 30-strong gang stormed a prison at Nagercoil in Tamil Nadu where they beheaded a man jailed for murder and escaped with his severed head, the Press Trust of India reported. (AP)

Square bashing

Moscow: Russia will stage a military parade in Red Square on May 9 to mark the victory over Germany in the Second World War, thus reviving the Soviet tradition of huge military displays. (AFP)

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Jessica makes pre-flight checks while training

Pilot aged seven aims to fly across US twice

FROM GILES WHITTILL IN LOS ANGELES

AMELIA EARHART would turn in her watery grave. Fifty-nine years after the legendary aviator disappeared over the Pacific, another female hopes to make flying history — but with an instructor at her side and extensions strapped to her legs.

Jessica Dubroff, seven, takes off today from the quiet resort of Half Moon Bay, south of San Francisco. At 4 ft 2 in she is set to become the smallest person to pilot a plane across the US. She needs the leg extensions to reach the rudder pedals.

With her instructor, Joe Reid, in the co-pilot's seat, and her father, Lloyd Dubroff, behind them, Jessica faces a 6,500-mile odyssey over the Rockies and the Great Lakes to Massachusetts, all in a four-seat Cessna.

So advanced is the infant-pilot cult in America that records go only to those who make the return flight. In 1987

an 11-year-old Texan became the youngest to fly coast-to-coast, but his record was broken twice within a year. Since 1988 it has been held by Tony Aliengena, who flew from San Diego to Boston and back within nine.

Miss Dubroff has been flying barely a year. Her number of hours in the air so far is 30, a tally she will more than double during the trip. With strong tailwinds and no mishaps it could take a mere 40 hours, but if turbulence forces Mr Reid to take the controls she must repeat the whole leg to stay in contention.

America's latest aviation pioneer lacks the intercom-friendliness of an airline pilot, but shows promise in the field of reckless nonchalance.

"I'm going to fly till I fly solo," she said in one interview, a reference to a federal ban on solo flying by under-16s. "I'm going to fly till I die."



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THE TIMES WEDNESDAY APRIL 10 1996

Mandela's links with rogue states vex West

FROM INIGO GILMORE IN CAPE TOWN

A VISIT by Alfred Nzo, the South African Foreign Minister, to Iran has raised concern in the West over the foreign policy initiatives of the Government led by the African National Congress.

With cool assurance the Pretoria Government has publicly rejected Washington's attempts to influence its relationship with Iran, accused by the Americans of sponsoring terrorism. On Monday Iran's official news agency quoted Mr Nzo at the start of his three-day visit to promote economic co-operation as saying that South Africa did not follow the American policy of trying to isolate Iran. "Relations with Iran are good," he said pointedly.

Last year, after South Africa agreed in principle to allow Iran to store 15 million barrels of oil at a coastal depot, President Mandela's Government was criticised by Washington. Iran, which supplies 90 per cent of South Africa's oil, has indicated its intention to press ahead with the project. After talks with President Rafsanjani, Mr Nzo said the oil storage agreement only required the resolution of technical problems.

Mr Nzo's visit to Tehran comes against the backdrop of growing concern about the direction and substance of South African foreign policy. President Mandela has made

it clear that South Africa intends to maintain friendly ties with states such as Cuba and Iran and will not be deterred by criticism of terrorist links or dubious human rights records.

Pitfalls in the policy were highlighted as South Africa tried to negotiate with Nigeria's military rulers. After the execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other Ogoni activists by the Abacha Government, Mr Mandela performed a volte face and led international condemnation of the junta. But when other southern African leaders failed to support him he had to back down.

A further backtracking in Pretoria's hardline position towards the Abacha Government was highlighted by the problems encountered by Nigerian opposition figures in reaching Johannesburg for a meeting last weekend.

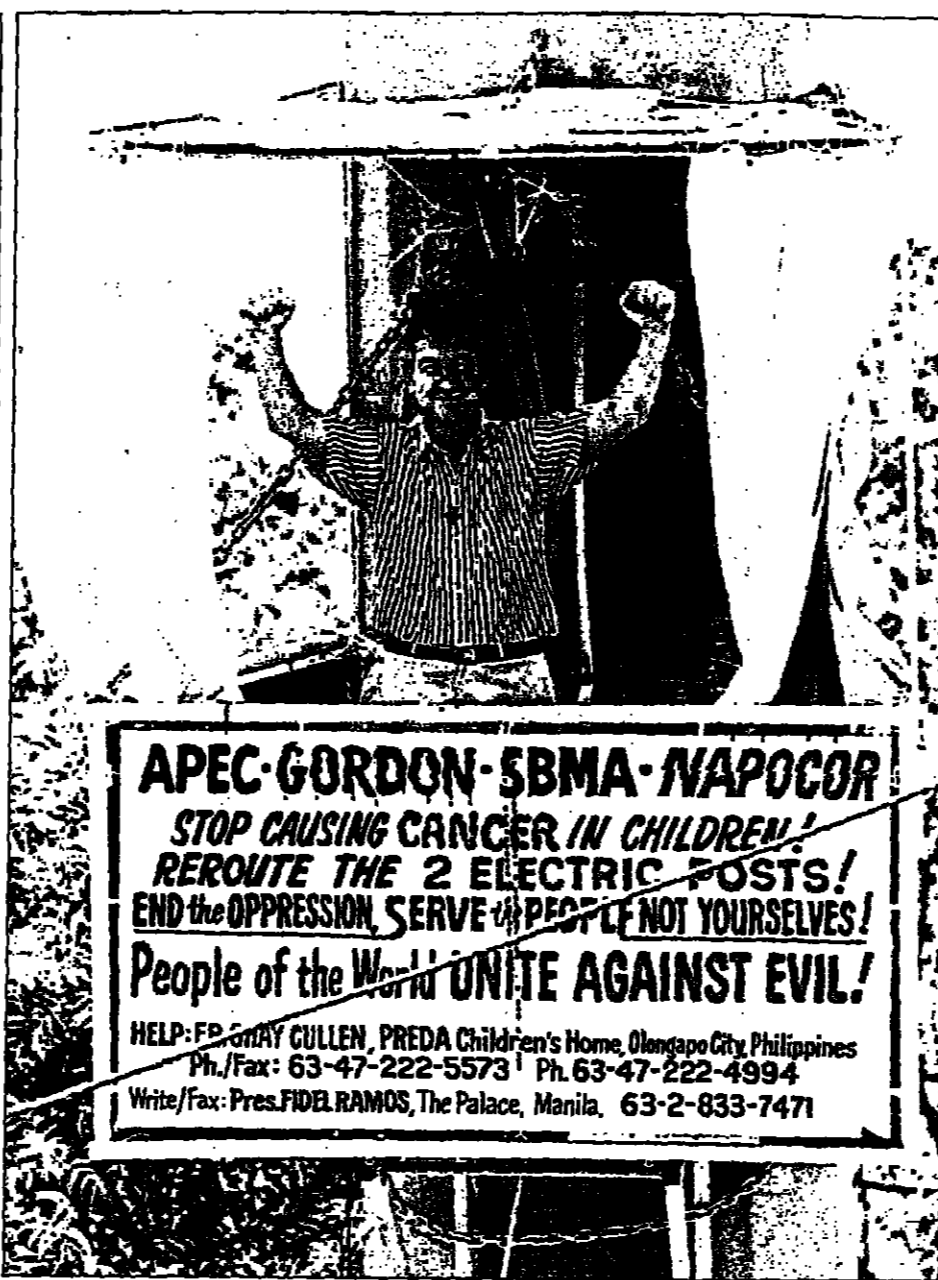
There is talk in Pretoria of a more pragmatic approach to foreign policy. Yet while Mr Mandela may have fallen more closely into step with Britain and America over Nigeria, other headaches can be expected over his ad hoc approach to foreign policy. On the back of a visit to South Africa by a prominent Algerian Islamic terrorist in February, representatives of the anti-Israeli Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, are expected in the country for an Islamic conference.

Mr Mandela has also raised eyebrows by inviting Muammar Gaddafi, the Libyan leader, to visit South Africa. There is concern in Western circles that South Africa could become a haven for supporters of pariah and rogue states and behind the scenes diplomatic pressure is being brought to bear on Pretoria.

"South African foreign policy is often bewildering and perplexing," one Western diplomat said. "Western governments are making it clear they are not always happy with the company the South African Government is keeping."



Gaddafi: invited to be a guest of Pretoria



Father Cullen on his Philippines electricity pylon yesterday, where he spent a fourth day protesting against the siting of a power cable above a children's home

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Priest's power struggle on pylon

FROM REUTER IN OLONGAPO

AN IRISH priest remained perched on a 40ft electricity pylon in the Philippines for the fourth day yesterday in protest against the installation of a power cable near a children's home.

"I have to stay here on this platform as a symbol of our determination to protect the children... I will stay here until the National Power Corp will agree to remove this post," said Father Shay Cullen, 53, who is urging the leaders of the Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation forum (Apec) to back his protest.

Apec leaders are to hold a summit meeting in November in Subic, 50 miles northwest of Manila. The priest, who has lived in the Philippines for many years, climbed the pylon in nearby Olongapo on Saturday to demand the rerouting of a cable installed to provide back-up power for the meeting.

Father Cullen said the high-tension cable would pass just above a rehabilitation centre he runs for victims of child prostitution and drug addiction and was likely to emit electromagnetic radiation harmful to the children.

The 5ft by 5ft platform on top of the pylon has a cellular telephone, a fax machine and a portable lavatory.

Cuban hardliners launch purge of party reformists

FROM DAVID ADAMS IN MIAMI

CUBA'S Communist Party has declared an "ideological battle" for "revolutionary purity" against dissenters and is targeting reformists within party ranks.

In language worthy of the Cold War at its height, Cuba has warned professionals and academics of an American-inspired plot to undermine the revolution through a "Trojan horse" subterfuge of cultural and intellectual exchanges.

Heads have started to roll in Havana, where officials point to a "fifth column" of academics, researchers and businessmen suspected of being seduced into "unpatriotic" activities by contacts with democracy and capitalism.

The crackdown comes at a time of heightened US-Cuban tension after the shooting down in February of two small civilian planes carrying four Cuban exiles. In retaliation, the US passed a harsh embargo law last month.

Analysts say the intellectual spy-versus-spy crisis is part of a continuing power struggle between Havana's reformers and hardliners. It is also the product of policy divisions in Washington where the anti-Castro lobby has been pushing for tougher sanctions while Clinton Administration aides favoured increased contact with Cuban reformists.

Havana was growing increasingly uneasy over the

academic exchanges after an October initiative by the Clinton Administration to boost "people to people" contacts. American officials openly discussed how they hoped this would strengthen the growth of civil groups operating more or less independently of the Communist Party.

For a while Cuba seemed to tolerate it. After the collapse of the state's traditional Soviet bloc benefactors, academics and non-governmental organisations badly needed resources and opportunities to travel and participate in international forums.

British headline: The Government has opened a hotline to help British businesses hit by America's tightening of the Cuban embargo, and is looking at ways to get round the laws (Michael Binyon writes).

Britain has protested forcefully to the Clinton Administration and may challenge the legislation's constitutionality. The Government has begun talks with its European Union partners on the next move, and may report Washington to the World Trade Organisation if it finds the laws contradict US international obligations.

A Department of Trade and Industry policy document says Washington may be drawing up a "hit list" of British companies likely to face a challenge in American courts.

South Korea leader awaits poll in eye of the storm

FROM ROB HUGHES IN SEOUL

BEFORE 20 million South Koreans get up to vote in today's general election, President Kim Young Sam will already have been up with the dawn, jogging and then swimming in the tranquility of his official residence in Seoul.

Outside the walls of the Blue House residence, there have been daily bulletins threatening war from the isolated Communist North Korea; there have been student riots after the death, apparently from natural causes, of an activist protesting against government policy; and there are the trials of two former presidents charged with treason and corruption.

The contrast between this and the serenity of the President is explained when you join him for a barn run. He says that jogging is essential to set up his body

and clear his mind for his 12-hour working day dealing with his problems. As a Presbyterian brought up in the Confucian stoic style, President Kim puts the mind-and-body principle to the fore. So do his staff: in the astonishingly well equipped Blue House gymnasium, members of the presidential household and PSS secret security staff exercise in Taekwondo, Kendo and a breathing-and-meditation ritual known as Tanjo.

Outside, in daylight, you would not know Seoul was on a war footing. You may meet, around a street corner, members of a riot squad prepared to meet student dissidents, but the street cafes bustle, and life is calm. The people are convinced that the present threats are nothing more than propaganda.

One of President Kim's advisers, Dr Lee Hong Koo, Prime Minister until last December, says there is an antipathy in the country towards politics and politi-

cians. "I am discouraged to find very little enthusiasm from the young," he says. "They think politicians are no good anyway, and we are forecasting the lowest turnout ever."

Dr Lee said that after many years committed to unification between the Koreans, he would prefer to win the bid to host the 2002 football World Cup (the choice for which will be on June 1) rather than today's National Assembly vote. "We have lost a political election before, in 1988, but survived," he said. "But the World Cup is once in a lifetime."

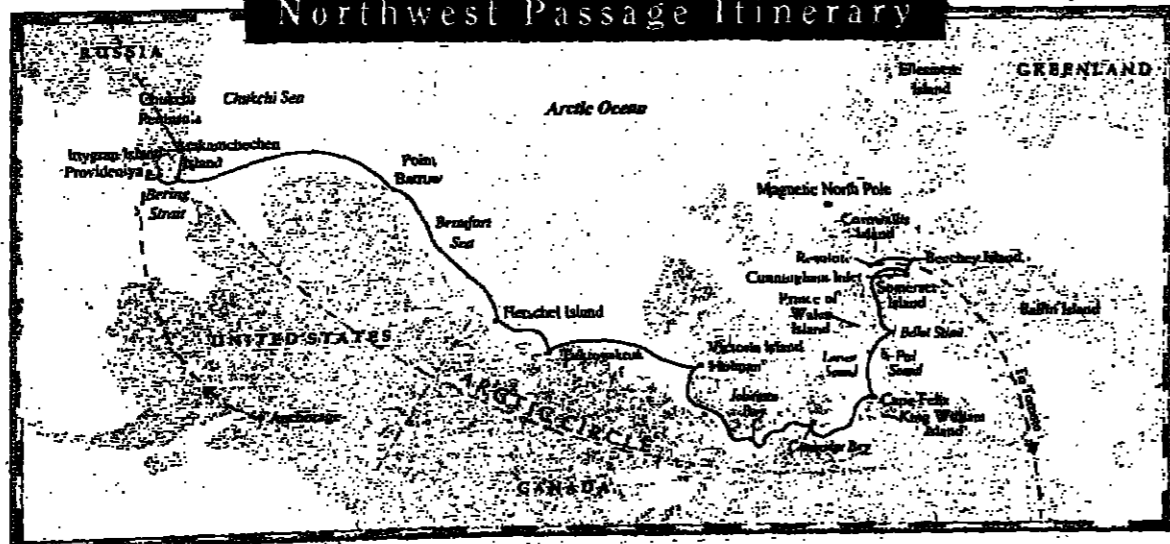
But President Kim said: "Both are equally important. The World Cup would help to change the nation's destiny... And if we were to defeat Japan for this World Cup, I see no reason to exclude our neighbour in the North. It would give me great pleasure to visit Pyongyang for a football match there. It would be a tremendous contribution to unification."



President Kim, left, jogs with Rob Hughes and an aide

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ox and numerous seabirds. We will visit ancient villages and call at Inuit settlements far above the Arctic Circle. And because the expedition is planned early in the season, we will be breaking lots of ice - a thrill in itself. To see our icebreaker at work in the northern seas and hear the crunch of the ice against her hull is an unforgettable experience.

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Dennis Potter: he had only weeks to live when he told Melvyn Bragg "I can celebrate life"

How Dennis Potter found serenity



Melvyn Bragg recalls his final interview with Britain's leading TV dramatist, who found solace and inspiration in his last days

And so it has come to pass. The programmes will be made as prophesied. There is something in the memory of Dennis Potter which magnetises the biblical.

"Will there be any stars, any stars in my crown, when the sun goes down?" He chanted this in the last interview I did with him two years ago. "When I wake with the blessed in the mansion of rest will there be any stars in my crown?"

Like Potter, I belong to what might be the last English generation saturated in the hymns and psalms and King James's words of English Protestant Christianity, with all the implications of a deep reservoir of guilt and tantalising prospects of a rare understanding beyond ordinary sense.

It was the religious undercurrent which gave that last interview its resonance. The reaction it provoked was unique in my experience as a broadcaster and the letters which cascaded on Dennis in the Forest of Dean, on Michael Grade in his Channel 4 office and on myself were testaments that a connection had been made between the writer and an audience, a connection both raw and direct. The most public and common-place of mediums had grappled with a most private revelation and called up deeply personal responses.

That could be sensed during the recording of the interview itself. We met at 9am because that was when he had most strength and there was only one shot. And this was precious time stolen from writing those last two plays. It is the plays, of course, which have come to pass — *Karaoke* and *Cold Lazarus*, four episodes of each — to be shown later this month, as he requested in the interview, both on BBC1 and Channel 4.

It must be the first time that anyone has used an interview to secure such a contract. But that was only a small part of it. He brought up the idea of Englishness; he mocked his terrible cancer; he spoke of his father and his failure with his father and the

continuation of his father in himself.

Constituency after constituency was conquered. And just by being there he spoke about courage, which he also discussed explicitly, surprised and relieved as he was to discover that his reaction to the certainty of his death finally dissolved a lifelong fear: that he was a physical coward. There were two things above all, though, which to me are inexplicable. The first was his decision to do the interview and to do it in every sense so openly. Open about everything — even the pain.

On that morning he had taken his usual careful allocation of pills, enough to mute the pain but not dull his mind. He wanted a drink to set him up. Champagne. Then there was the black coffee and cigarettes. And finally his silver hip flask of liquid morphine which he needed so badly when suddenly, after about 40 minutes, he jackknifed in agony.

Deliberately, we had made this television studio as bare as we could and the shooting was simple. In that context, Potter's intensity glowed. It lit up the screen with a radiance which only the surly could deny. "At certain points I felt I was flying with it," he said as we finished.

Graham Greene has a passage in an essay to the effect that extreme moments bring out and need clichés. As Dennis and I left the studio which had become something of a confessional, some-

thing of a pulpit and a space for self-analysis, one of the cameramen came up to me. There was a feeling between almost giddy exhilaration and stunned realisation that a life was about to be guttered out.

The cameraman said: "That was a bit of history." To judge from the letters and calls and conversations I have had over the past two years, this was a view widely shared. The very fact of it was an event.

The second important thing for me was an aspect of the television interview which has grown stronger as time passes. It was his description of "the nowness".

Knowing for certain that he was to die within a few weeks, he said: "The only thing you know for sure is the present time. The nowness becomes so vivid to me that in a perverse sort of way I am almost serene. I can celebrate life."

"Below my window in Ross, for example, the blossom is out in full. It's a plum tree — it looks like apple blossom but it's white. And instead of saying 'oh, that's nice blossom' looking at it through the window when I am writing, it is the whitest, frostiest, blossomiest blossom that there ever could be."

What he did there, I think, was to privilege those who know they have a short time to live. Such a death sentence can panic you, stupefy you, bring up the feelings of futility latent in us all. It can be seen as a wretched weakened

stump end to life, sans almost everything.

No, said Potter, it can be the most compelling, the most astonishing passage of life — indeed, those of us who have this knowledge of a certain end are even an elite. "The nowness of everything is absolutely wondrous. There's no way of telling you, you have to experience it — the glory of it if you like, the comfort of it, the reassurance."

It is that, I believe, which gave such a sing to so many of the letters, even those I myself received. "Will you tell Mr Potter we think he is very brave and made us feel ashamed of our aches and pains... excuse this writing, I have bad arthritis." "I feel compelled to write to you and say how privileged I feel to have shared the passion and vulnerability of such an outpouring of a dying man's reflections." "I curse myself for taking things for granted, for self-pitying, for wasting time and at times feeling sorry for myself. I feel it brought me closer to God! Truly there will be stars in his crown. God bless him."

His words spread from the comparatively few who are ill and therefore saw not only an example of fortitude but the philosophy of positive enhanced life, to the many who have great difficulty in living in the moment: in putting aside getting and spending which "lays waste our powers".

Dennis Potter's gift was to grace what in his and similar circumstances is largely regarded as the wasted end of a life, with a conviction and an insight which spoke a truth at least as great as the lengthening of a life — the truth of the quality of the lived experience. He demonstrated it in himself and he articulated it for others.

At the very least, what he did for people, in the full sense of that lovely phrase, was "to give them pause".

"The fact is that if you see the present tense, boy do you see it and boy can you celebrate it!"

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The CSA: strangled at birth

It is difficult to resist with anything other than lip-curling cynicism to the news — news? — that the Child Support Agency (CSA) has been an utter failure. But I can't see how it could have been otherwise. All along the line the CSA has been a complete disgrace for the fact is, since its very inception it has not been allowed to succeed.

That really is not to put the case too strongly. The way all attempts to make men responsible for their children have been undermined is indeed scandalous. The CSA was brought into being in order to bring to book men who had abandoned their families — and was then promptly attacked for doing so. It is widely seen to be vengeful,

How could the Child Support Agency succeed when all its efforts were opposed and undermined?

driven by men-hating vindictiveness and motivated by nothing less than a brutal feminist agenda.

I find it infinitely tiresome when every debate, every issue is seen as a gender-sensitive one, and every particle of evidence is dissected for its possible inherent sexism. I don't want to join that particular sisterhood, but the closing in of some male protectionist racket in all this is undeniable. That can't be ignored, and shouldn't be.

It's not that people try to pull one over that infuriates me, but that they succeed so

easily. Single mothers are easy to blame: there aren't that many powerful people ready to stand up for them. Naturally, I am not saying that all single mothers are misunderstood, put-upon creatures who must not be held responsible for their own actions. But — and I'm sorry to cite the jaunty phrasing of our grandparents' generation — it does take two to tango. Anyone would think that the single mother were a case of virgin birth in reverse: she alone is sulked, impure, a self-fertilising devilish whore. Logically, you simply cannot put all the blame of an undesirable conception on one of the parties alone: biology dictates that a sperm and an egg are equally necessary; those who possess the latter cannot be more to blame for a conception than the owners of the former.

That has to be, along with a good many other things, the belief of those who constructed the CSA. Even if you argue that a man who played no part in deciding to have a child, and often was ignorant that he may have fathered one, should not be held accountable at some later date, there was no real disagreement about men who simply left their first families in order to start a second. We all knew where their duties lay. So you'd think. But the ruckus that ensued. Men, it was reported, were having their lives ruined, the children of their second wives were being persecuted: this was state-instituted persecution. That such nonsense could



Nigella Lawson

even be tolerated is ludicrous: a demonstration of second wives and their children marching to Downing Street with placards bemoaning their lot goes beyond satire. I

Men who bleat about supporting their children deserve nothing but contempt

watched these people on television: they actually believed that they were being hard done by. Peevish men said that they had moved on, had a new life, new family and why couldn't the rest of us understand that? But we cannot all be free spirits: we do have obligations, however irritating these may be. Men who bleat about the unfair expense of having to support their

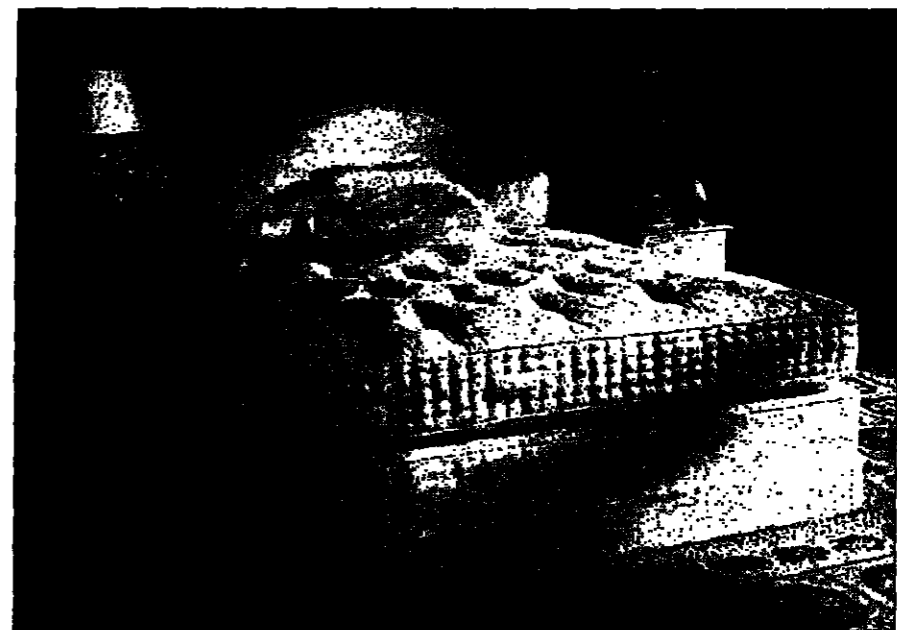
children deserve nothing but contempt. Instead they are listened to sympathetically.

Everyone wants to gratify their own desires regardless of what reality demands of them. I read recently an account of a woman who'd married and had a baby with a man who had three children from a previous marriage. When these poor children's mother died and the children had to come and live with her, she complained of being deprived of her life with her husband and their child alone. It is lunatic for a woman to marry a man with three children and expect a life alone with him, as if they didn't exist. Unfortunately, this is how a good many men feel things should be, too. One cannot and should not legislate against people's selfishness, or refuse them the right to their wicked self-delusions, but we really do not want a government agency colluding with them in all of it.

Frank Field, the Labour MP who has attacked the CSA for having, in effect, granted an amnesty to all those men who ignore letters sent to them by the agency, is absolutely right. He wants to recoup money from errant fathers through the tax system. That makes all of us feel nervous — it sounds so coercive, so illiberal — but if the nice cop can't get results maybe it is time for the nasty cop.

At the moment the CSA is not even managing to get one in four of the men it contacts to pay something towards their own children. Yet it is still seen as an ideologically suspect crusading body. It says something about what's really being allowed to go on that any attempt to make men financially responsible for their own children is seen as a desire for revenge rather than justice.

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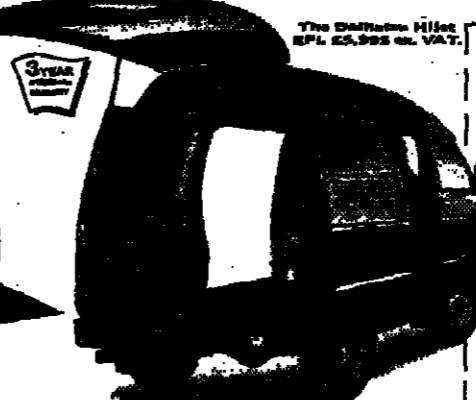
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Alan Coren



■ Antiques are old, rare and expensive. But we all have something collectible

As a cutting-edge media guru on constant alert for new TV formats designed to ensure my never having to do an honest day's work again, I can't tell you how excited I am by what came to me, out of the blue, last Sunday. I was lying on my couch in a vacant and pensive mood composed of two parts Vat 69 to one part Hugh Scully banging on about bun-footed Ming chronometers, when there suddenly flashed upon my inward eye a vision of how not merely to pinch but to double the already remarkable audience of 12 million his show enjoys.

My show will be called *The Non-Antiques Road Show*. It is based on the premise that while only some people are interested in curious things some people have, everybody is interested in curious things everybody has. Our scene now shifts to the head of a five-mile queue.

Punter: I wondered what this was. It goes thunk-thunk-thunk and lurches round the kitchen.

Expert: How long has it been in your family?

Punter: One year, five days, but it has been doing this only five days.

Expert: What did it do before that?

Punter: It did crockery. We thought it was a dishwasher.

Expert: Close. It is in fact a former dishwasher. It is now a tin box. If you'd just help me lean it over so that we can examine the underside, thanks, do you see that little tag? It's called a warranty.

Punter: How interesting! What does it do?

Expert: It ran out five days ago. How much did you pay for the piece?

Punter: £95. We love it for itself, of course, but we did sort of wonder what it would fetch if it came up at auction today.

Expert: Nothing. Next!

Punter: I was hoping you could identify this.

Expert: I'm not sure I can. I've never seen anything like it. It appears to be a drawer standing on four vertical shelves, topped by a horizontal door bearing a display of assorted knobs. How did you come by it?

Punter: I made it from a kit. The box said it was a sideboard.

Expert: I see. And you followed the instructions?

Punter: Yes. They were in Japanese, but my old man was in Changi so he knew the odd word. By the way, it is one of a pair. The other box said it was a bunk-bed, but it came out the same. Are they collectible?

Expert: Only if you tip the binmen. Next!

Punter: I was given this as a wedding present. I don't know what it is, but when you put a slice of bread in it, it turns black and goes bang.

Expert: Fascinating! If I were you I'd insure it to the hilt immediately.

Punter: Wow! So it's something of special interest, then?

Expert: Only to lawyers. If a guest tried it and got fused to the National Grid, you could be looking at the wrong end of six figures. Next!

Punter: 4: My wife and I just moved house, and we were very excited to find this stuck away in the attic. Can you tell me what it is?

Expert: It is an exercise bicycle.

Punter: 4: What is it for?

Expert: It is for sticking away in the attic. Next!

Punter: 5: My father was a keen gardener, and built up a huge collection of these items which I have just inherited. What are they?

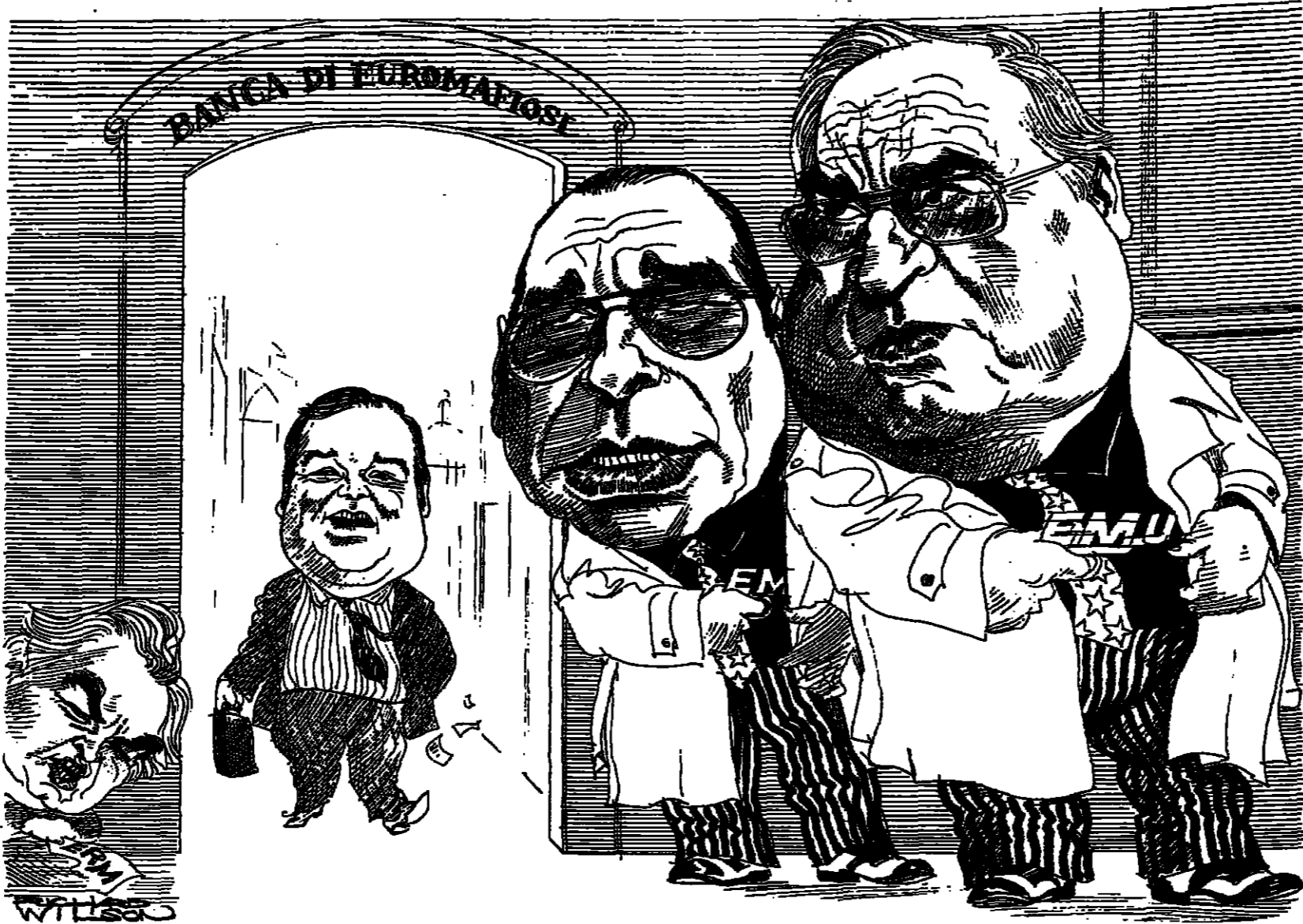
Expert: They are known to the trade as sprinklers. You attach them to a hose, run into the spray, hit them with a stick so that they turn twice, then you go out and buy some more.

Punter: 5: Should I hang on to them?

Expert: Only if you want to be hurled across the lawn. Next!

Punter: 6: For years we used this to prop open the back door, never imagining it was worth anything, until a friend said he thought it might be Chinese. Is he right?

Expert: Yes. I'm pretty sure it's a crispy duck from, at a guess, the late 1980s. The boom in takeaway food has brought countless rare artefacts to our attention. I recently saw a slice of deep-dish pizza which had been down the side of a sofa since the Royal Wedding. Next!



Say no to a new ERM

At Verona, Clarke should resist the threats of the hard men of Europe's hard core, says Bernard Connolly

This Friday, the European Union's finance ministers and central bank governors will meet in Verona "informally". In typical EU fashion, "informals" are where the most important economic decisions are taken, as far away as possible from even the pretence of accountability. The Verona gathering looks likely to be the most explosive since the Bath meeting in September 1992. The common factor is, of course, the dreaded exchange-rate mechanism (ERM), the most perfect instrument ever devised for ruining economies and setting Community countries at each other's throats.

The European Union, said President Chirac of France, must provide itself with a means of "punishing" countries that do not "accept the common discipline" imposed by the establishment of a monetary union among a small group of European countries, the self-elected "hard core" of Germany, France, the Benelux and Austria. What this would mean in practice, if the "hard core" countries (the "ins") get their way, is that the EU countries that do not participate (the "outs") will have to submit instead to a new ERM.

The demands of the "ins" are illuminating. When monetary union was being sold to the uneasy populations of the European countries, it was presented both as the gateway to an economic nirvana and as an indispensable symbol of the fellow-feeling of European peoples. At Verona, we shall see the unpleasant reality behind this most pernicious of all Euro-myths.

The "ins" are afraid that if other countries retain the freedom to manage monetary policy in their own interest they will be at an advantage. The "ins" talk of discriminatory trade measures or even fines being imposed on "outs" that refuse to join a new ERM. They are signalling that life outside the euro might turn out to be life in the comfort zone, not out in the cold: monetary union is not so much a two-speed process as a two-class system.

Some countries are more equal than others. For the self-selecting oligarchy of Single Currency Farm, the Union's interest means their interest, or at least their misguided conceptions of their interest. They are prepared to pursue it even at the expense of further damaging any sense of legality and fairness in the way the EU operates, of destroying the Single Market and of abandoning the stated underlying objectives of the EU.

Why should potential "outs" agree at Verona to a new mechanism? The so-called "southern periphery" — Italy, Spain, Portugal and Greece — unwisely wants to participate in a single currency as soon as the hard core will allow. This will probably turn out to be never. The "ins" would be much happier to maintain indefinitely a mark II ERM which allowed them to dictate the monetary and economic policies of the southern countries than to allow them into, in effect, a political union. But the hope, however naive and misguided, that they might someday be granted entry to the inner circle is likely to make the southern countries jump when they are told to jump. If ever reason prevailed, the whip of a drastic reduction in EU handouts will be cracked when the EU's financial settlement (the "Delors II" package) comes up for renegotiation in 1998.

Britain and Sweden are in a very different position. In both countries, government heavyweights want to be part of the single currency, but their populations are dead against it. Neither government can openly appeal to desire for future monetary union as an excuse for acceding to hard-core demands. And neither country can be threatened by an amputation of EU transfer payments: indeed they would benefit from it, since they pay far more into the Euro-coffers than they get out (BSE or no).

Would they, then, be breaking any EU laws or agreements if they refused to join up for the "common discipline" of a new ERM? On the face of it, the answer is "no". For that we have to thank Norman Lamont, who, according to his account of the Maastricht negotiations, headed off an attempt by John Major and Douglas Hurd to have ERM membership made legally binding. But Maastricht stipulates that the "outs" have to treat their exchange rates as a matter of common interest (no similar obligation is imposed on the "ins"). And a one article obliges member countries to facilitate the EU's tasks and to avoid any action that could jeopardise the

Union's objectives, including the single currency.

The "ins" will try to interpret these two articles, however dubiously, as requiring the "outs" to manage their monetary policies and exchange rates for the benefit of the "ins". Since some of the more obvious candidates for "out" status are the EU's poorer countries, that interpretation runs counter to the underlying objectives of "solidarity" and "social cohesion". The interpretation would also involve macroeconomic instability and difficulties in structural improvement for the "outs", running counter to the treaty's objectives of sustainable and non-inflationary growth, convergence of economic performance, a high level of employment and raised standards of living.

Unfortunately, a common-sense reading of the treaty will cut no ice with the hard men of the hard core. They will claim, in the face of a wide contrary consensus among economists, that the Single Market cannot operate properly if there are movements among the EU currencies. (This argument, incidentally, was not made when the Single Market programme was being agreed; instead, it was conveniently "discovered" as soon as the signatures were on the 1986 treaty revision required for the implementing legislation.)

It is this specious argument that will be used to justify the threat of trade sanctions and fines against Britain. Yet there is no provision within the treaty for the whole central thrust of the Common Market, as the EU was once reassuringly known. This seems to be of little moment in hard-core eyes. But sanctions would require a treaty revision — opening the Pandora's box of re-confirmation that France, more than any other country, is afraid of. And tinkering with Britain's net EU contribution would require the approval of Parliament, something that would surely never be forthcoming, whether before or after a general election.

If Kenneth Clarke has the guts — and if he really wants to do so — he can simply refuse to play ball at Verona. More likely, however, the British Gov-

ernment will try to avoid a stand-off. It is well known that Clarke will argue for the maintenance of Britain's present inflation-targeting approach to economic management. But it has also been reported that Britain will offer to have its policies and performance monitored by the EU — in effect by the Commission acting on behalf of the "ins".

The judgment that would be applied would certainly not take Britain's interest as its basis. After all, Belgium's Finance Minister, Philippe Maystadt, one of the fiercest proponents of a discriminatory approach, recently proclaimed that the point of monetary union was to prevent "an encroachment of Anglo-Saxon values" in Europe. The real fear of the hard core, hidden behind the twisted rhetoric about preserving the Single Market, is that Britain will become too successful an exemplar of a free-market economic model that has little in common with the Rhineland model underlying the EU.

Accepting an increased degree of EU influence over Britain's economic policies would therefore be economically damaging to the country. Even worse, it would represent a cession of national sovereignty on a par with that of the secret Treaty of Dover in 1670, when Charles II accepted handouts from Louis XIV in return for a commitment to tailor English foreign policy to suit French interests. The Glorious Revolution, enshrining parliamentary sovereignty as protector of the national interest, followed soon after in the brief reign of Charles's successor.

A reassertion of national and parliamentary sovereignty is urgently needed in response to the ever-increasing encroachments of the Maastricht treaty. For that treaty itself revolutionised the EU. It enshrined the supposed Community interest (for which read the Franco-German interest, the bureaucratic interest and the corporatist interest) as separate from and higher than the pursuit by the member states of national interests.

It is for that reason that Verona — even if, against all the indications, Kenneth Clarke is prepared to tough it out — can at best be no more than a holding operation. Britain must rethink the philosophy it embraced, albeit with distaste, at Maastricht. The one virtue of the "ins and outs" debate may be to make that clear to everyone.

Simon Jenkins is away

An end to child sex tourism

Britain must act, Rachel Campbell-Johnston writes

A former Australian ambassador has been charged with sex offences committed against children while overseas. His arrest draws urgent attention to one of the most submerged social problems of the modern world. Child prostitution is a brutal trade in human life. It is ruthlessly legislated against in Britain, but sex tourists can travel abroad to Asia, Latin America, Africa and former communist bloc countries to feed their tastes. This dehumanising industry thrives in the developing world like some perverse travesty of colonialism.

Children from impoverished rural families are lured to the cities only to be ensnared in debt by prostitution syndicates. At risk of violence and disease, they are obliged to engage in activities which they are too young to choose freely. Often they are beaten, starved and drugged into passivity.

The extent of this industry is, of course, hard to monitor, but higher estimates are veracious: some 200,000 Nepalese children have been sold into sexual slavery in India; in Thailand perhaps as many as a quarter of a million children work in brothels; in Colombia one third of all prostitutes are thought to be under the age of 14.

It is a cause of national shame that the British should be among the worst offenders. The Government is backing a Private Member's Bill to make it an offence to organise sex tours involving children. It had its second successful Commons reading on February 2 and is to go on to the report stage later this month. Paedophile tour operators could face the sternest sentences.

We should welcome this Bill as a first step. But its implementation, involving as it does the extension of existing conspiracy laws, will present formidable difficulties. Offending tour operators have already fled underground, spreading information through the Internet and under-the-counter magazines. Even if they are brought to trial, it will be practically impossible to pin upon them direct responsibility for the actions of their clients. Besides, paedophiles intent on sex tend to act in isolation, slipping unnoticed into the mass of holiday-makers on the move. What Britain really needs is a further, more stringent law targeting the abusers themselves.

At present, British authorities are restricted to assisting with information and extraditing paedophiles suspected of crimes abroad. But in March last year, Lord Hylton introduced a Private Member's Bill in the House of Lords which would make it possible to try offenders in British courts. Similar legislation is already on the statute books in the United States, Australia, Germany, France, Sweden and Norway.

The British Government, however, is reluctant to follow suit. It is prudently wary of interfering with the laws of other nations, or setting a precedent in extrajurisdictional jurisdiction. What if other countries took this as their model? Would we approve of fundamentalist Islamic governments bringing cases against their own nationals who were known to have got drunk while on holiday over here?

Mounting a feasible case would prove both complicated and expensive. Bringing witnesses to court for instance — a key requirement of English law — is not simple when an offence is committed overseas, and even less so where children are involved. Minors cannot simply be transplanted into an alien culture for the duration of a trial and then returned home, most especially in cases where they risk the retribution of former employers. If legislation were to be ineffective, it could also be severely counterproductive, deterring foreign governments from action.

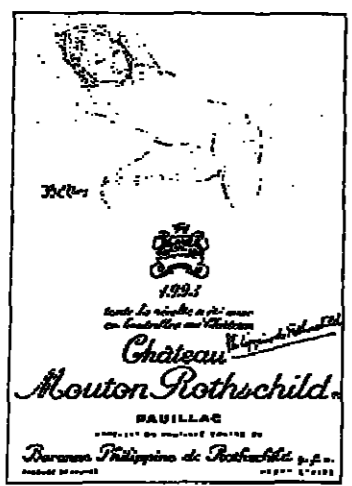
But the presence of obstacles cannot justify inaction. Britain already has extrajurisdictional legislation for war crimes and genocide, and sexual offences against children could be considered as grave an infringement of human rights as these. Options of escape should be closed to nationals who, convicted abroad, slip loose by bribing officials or jumping bail. Indeed, considering that countries such as the Philippines are now threatening to impose the death sentence on child abusers, a British trial sounds more humane.

The appointment of more police liaison officers (already stationed in many countries for the drugs trade) to monitor child abuse, coupled with the use of video evidence and the cross-questioning of witnesses over live satellite link, can overcome many of the specific evidence laws. The Swedes have shown that such legislation can work. They brought a successful case against one of their nationals last year, and aid agencies have since noticed a marked decline in the number of Swedes abusing children abroad.

In August a world congress on the sexual exploitation of children is to be held in Stockholm. Britain ought to send a high-level delegation, able to make commitments on its behalf. There is much that the Government could do to speed the reluctant developing world into prosecuting paedophiles. The police database on paedophiles could, with proper safeguards, be made available to prosecuting authorities. Aid programmes could be extended to offer imaginative alternatives to communities living off the prostitution earnings of their children. Political pressure could be exerted on those who receive tourists to ensure that they do not disgrace their country. It is the least the world's children are entitled to expect.

Gripe water

BARONESS Philippine de Rothschild, chateleine of one of the finest wine-houses in France, has fallen victim to political correctness. She has been forced to change the label on a prize vintage of Château Mouton Rothschild because American consumers have objected to the fruitily little picture it sports of a naked young girl.



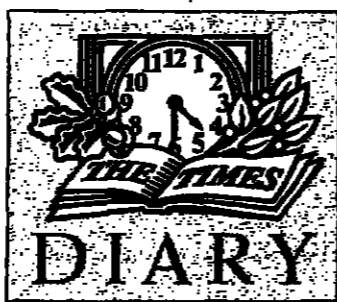
The vintage wine label, but not as America will see it

The labels on more than 30,000 bottles of the 1993 vintage (estimated value: £60 per bottle) destined for the United States have been ripped off to be replaced with nondescript versions without the girl.

The Baroness, who commissioned the picture by the Swiss-based artist Balthus, is said to be flummoxed by this American prudery. As I reported when the label was launched last year, she is intensely proud of its sensuality. "The fragile and mysterious girl Balthus has drawn seems to hint at some secret promise of undiscovered pleasure," she gushed at the time. "A pleasure to be shared."

Mouton Rothschild has invited painters to decorate its vin extraordinaire every year since 1945. Dali, Miró, Chagall, Bacon and even Warhol all daubed their marks on the Baroness's bottles. But never before has any artist been considered too earthy for the palates of crusty oenophiles.

● A Middle Eastern farmer has offered the Queen four of his best camels, to replace any herds of cattle destined for slaughter. Ahmed al-Hiswah has informed a



Yemen newspaper that camel is the ideal alternative for shoppers worried about "mad cow" disease. "Camel steaks are lean, tender, full of vitamins, and free of chemicals and hormones," he explains.

Unflagging

EURO-SCEPTICS are rejoicing at Conservative Central Office in Westminster: the Union Jack has been raised after a seven-year gap. In 1989, Kenneth Baker replaced the red, white and blue with a new party flag sporting the dreadful limp-wristed torch. This has always graced with deputy chairman Michael Trend, the MP for Windsor, and he has at last struck.

Armed with evidence from a recent survey of membership which showed that Conservatives favoured greater use of the Union

Jack, he stormed into the chairman's office, deployed grassroots sentiment, and in a lightning coup gained the necessary authority. The Baker torch is now confined to the dusty shelves where it belongs.

● The debates at the Cambridge Union next term have taken on a saucy tone. Along with "This House enjoys Pornography", there will be an Ann Summers night in the chamber. Attendance will be limited strictly to ladies.

Knives out

AN UGLY rumour is doing the rounds in the kitchens of Soho. Two of the angriest young men in London, Marco Pierre White and Damien "Pickler" Hirst, are said to be teaming up to launch their own restaurant.

I'm told that the chef and the artist have their sights set on a Soho establishment called Leon's Quo Vadis, although Marco Pierre White was noncommittal yesterday. "I cannot pass comment," he said. Should rumour become fact, diners will surely be surrounded by pickled farm animals.

Leg men

IF THE Princess of Wales thinks she is having a hard time over her



Senator Bob Dole stripped and ready for political action

legs, she should try being an American presidential candidate. In Washington, talk of legs has put Tony Blair's sightseeing trip in the shade.

Last week Senator Bob Dole, the likely Republican candidate, who has kept his pins well covered since an ill-advised appearance on a treadmill last year, showed them off while relaxing in Bal Harbour, Florida. Wearing a casual T-shirt over a richly-fed belly, the 72-year-old opted for the skimpiest of shorts to reveal a pair of "gams"

far superior to President Clinton's gelatinous thighs.

Dole's team is claiming a triumph. "We've had nothing but compliments," says his spokesman Clarkson Hine. "And as for those shorts, they are perfectly appropriate for someone as physically fit as Senator Dole." The President's advisers, meanwhile, have advised him to wear track-suit bottoms when jogging.

P.H.S

OBITUARIES

PROFESSOR MATTHEW HODGART

Matthew Hodgart, Professor of English, Sussex University, 1964-70, died on April 3 aged 79. He was born on September 1, 1916.

A shy and private man, Matthew Hodgart presented an apparently impermeable exterior to the outside world. Those who came to know him, however, and (better still) to understand his mind and imagination, found that his quirky wit, formidable erudition and diverse interests combined to make him always a reliable source of help. His passionate interest in ideas, sound judgment of writing and entertaining conversation made him also an enjoyable companion. His life and work could be said to represent a characteristic note in the variety of British intellectual life at the close of the 20th century.

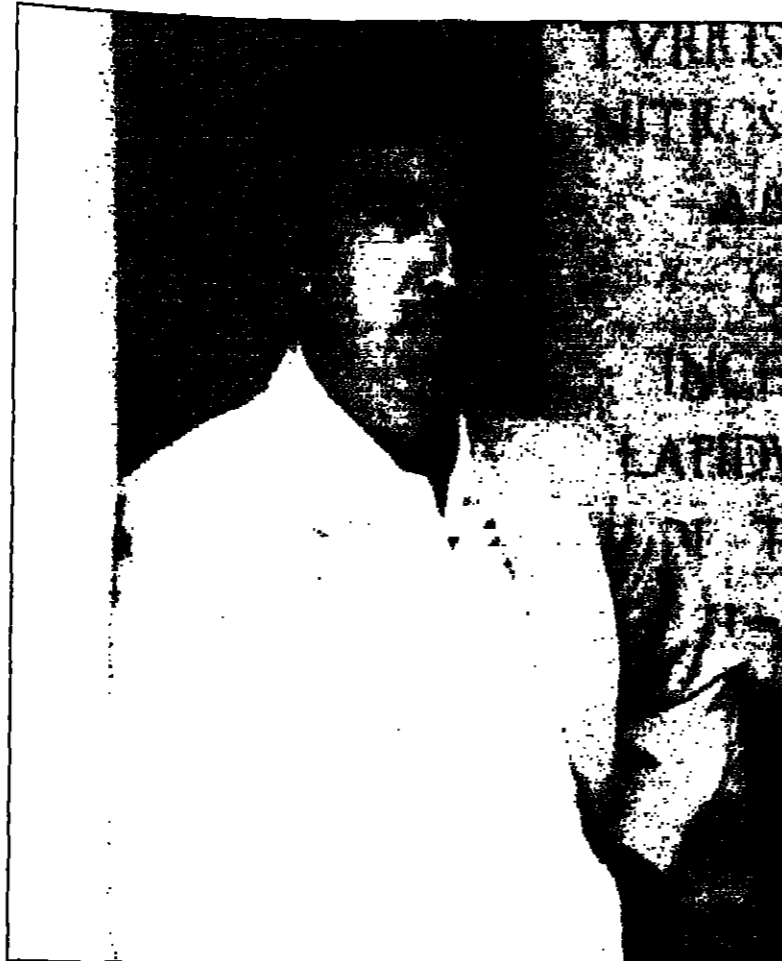
Matthew John Caldwell Hodgart was born in Paisley, the son of another Matthew Hodgart, a partner in a substantial firm of engineers, and Katherine Barbour Caldwell of a long-established local family of lawyers. From this heritage he may have drawn his knowledgeable rapport with the lairds and lawyers of 18th-century Scotland and, in particular, with James Boswell in Dr Johnson's circle. The same parental source could well have supplied his mathematical interests and skill in problem-solving.

His comfortable family background allowed him to be educated at Rugby School as a scholar and then to go on again as a scholar to Pembroke College, Cambridge, in 1935. He was an outstanding student and, after his BA in 1938, was awarded a Jebb Studentship to start postgraduate study.

In those last years of the Thirties, however, the aftermath of the Spanish Civil War and the misery of mass unemployment — accompanied by the shameless appeasement of the dictators — drove very many able and sensitive students at Cambridge and other universities into Marxist views (not least because these alone seemed to offer some possibility of relieving an apparently hopeless situation).

Matthew Hodgart was elected to the elitist social and discussion group, the Apostles, by then politicised to a degree, and within "the Society" (as its members like to call it) became part of an outstanding and talented group. He was also noted as an effective speaker for the Left in the Cambridge Union. Later he was sharply to revise his political convictions and to come to regret the part he had played in Cambridge politics. The outbreak of war in 1939 interrupted his academic career.

He was commissioned into The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, and served in the Mediterranean, French North Africa and in Corsica. For his work in intelligence he was mentioned in dispatches; in 1945 the French Government recognised his service with the Special Operations Executive by appointing him a Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur and by



awarding him the Croix de Guerre. In the same year he concluded his military service in India, and returned to Cambridge as an assistant lecturer in English, becoming Lecturer and Fellow of Pembroke College in 1949. He was a loyal member of the college, serving as wine steward and librarian, reflecting another two of his interests.

Hodgart was also a popular member of the Cambridge English Faculty, and an excellent teacher for pupils who knew what they were doing. His tutorials covered the breadth of the Cambridge English Tripos, from Chaucer and the Ballads to modern writing. He was a good example of a generalist; his encyclopaedic knowledge of English literature and rigorous examination of arguments, his own included, were challenges in discussion.

The students whom he taught, or whose work he supervised, numbered among them many of the best writers and scholars of the time, including Ted Hughes, the present Poet Laureate, and the formidable Harold Bloom. The latter was one of the many visiting Americans in Cambridge whose friendship he gained — and later maintained as they became influential critics and scholars — and through whom he pursued a keen interest in America and American literature and thought. From his teaching came a number of books, couched in the deceptively simple format of introductory treatments, but which were often

original, deftly written and seriously thoughtful.

His first volume was *The Ballads* (1950, revised 1962), which was a landmark in the developing interest in, and widespread appreciation of, folk-song, which marked the 1950s and 1960s: he developed this further in his widely read collection *The Faber Book of Ballads* (1965) which also includes Broadside, Irish, Australian and American ballads. He had a particular sympathy with 18th-century Scottish and English writing, represented by his excellent *Samuel Johnson* (1962) and a useful selection of Horace Walpole's *Memoirs and Portraits* (1963).

He was a much respected member of the Johnson Club of London and a president of the Johnson Club of Lichfield. A modest-looking but wide-ranging volume, *Saunders* (1969, several translations), also presents visual material about which he was extremely knowledgeable, and escapes the pedantry of form-criticism by a subtle discussion of the satiric temperament as a human characteristic. He also contributed to the *Review of English Studies*, *TLS* and the *New York Review of Books*.

Hodgart's wide reading and formidable scholarship were often united in his interest in puzzles and problems in order to give plausible readings of difficult passages. In 1955, when Robert Graves in his final Clark Lecture munificently offered a £1 note to

anyone who could make sense of "the opening stanza of Dylan Thomas's *If my head hurt a hair's foot*," he notes in the printed version of his lecture that "the ingenious Mr M. J. C. Hodgart of Pembroke... has stepped forward to claim the reward".

Graves, though, by publishing the lecture, remained master of the field. He declared that "there are flaws" in Hodgart's argument and adhered to his view that "the five lines taken as a whole remain nonsensical", thereby saving himself a pound. Yet the reader of *The Crowning Privilege* may well think that Hodgart's suggestion has much more merit than that; it certainly gives a line to the sense of Dylan Thomas's poem.

Hodgart's skill in reading was also put to use in handling James Joyce's text, not only in discussion and lectures, but in two informative volumes: the first (with Professor Michael P. Worthington), *Song in the Works of James Joyce* (1959), an early and formative treatment of an important topic, and the second, *James Joyce: Student Guide* (1978). A third volume (with Professor Ruth Bauerle), *Joyce's Grand Opera: Opera in Finnegans Wake*, will appear later this year.

Music was one of the interests he followed up thoroughly and seriously. In 1964 Hodgart left Cambridge, and began a series of teaching stints in different universities, often at the invitation of former colleagues and students. From 1964 to 1970 he was a Professor of English at Sussex, moving to live in a villa in the last group of Regency houses to be built in Brighton.

His teaching there was notable for a popular history and literature seminar on Joyce and Ireland, which he conducted with Professor Hugh Kearney, and which is remembered for its annual Bloomsday celebration on June 16. He was Visiting Professor at Cornell University in 1961-62 and in 1969; Professor of English at the then Concordia University in Montreal, 1970-76; Visiting Professor at the University of California at Los Angeles, 1977-78; at Stanford in 1979; at La Trobe in Australia, 1979-80; and Hinkley Professor of English at Johns Hopkins in 1982.

His second visit to Cornell at the height of the student discontent in American universities in the 1960s resulted in a *jeu d'esprit*, which ties in with his own student political activity at Cambridge, his interest in the 18th century and his fascination with satire: this was his brief volume *A New Voyage* (1969), a "fifth voyage" of Houellebecq's who in it returns to Houellebecq's land to find that the progressive young horses are unwise agents for the ending of the age-old injustice to the Yahoos by admitting them to the Assembly.

In 1940 he married Betty Joyce Hensbridge, who died in 1948. In 1949 he married, secondly, Margaret Patricia Elliott. She survives him, together with a son and daughter of his first marriage and an adopted daughter of his second.

GROUP CAPTAIN LARRY OSBORNE

Group Captain Larry Osborne, OBE, navigator, air traffic controller and supply specialist, died on March 12 aged 73. He was born on December 27, 1922.



THE first black officer to reach the rank he did in the Royal Air Force, Larry Osborne was also one of the most charismatic officers in the service of his time. From a modest upbringing in the West Indies, he went on to serve in numerous capacities during and after the war, first as a navigator, then in air traffic control and finally, when his sight deteriorated, in the Equipment Branch. There he was responsible for the computerisation of the RAF's supply system.

Lawrence Theodore Osborne was born in Trinidad and joined the RAF in 1943 as a navigator. His desire to fly stemmed from an early interest in astronomy and the rapport he built up with Coastal Command crews operating Hudson reconnaissance aircraft from Trinidad during the Battle of the Atlantic. His initial training was in Canada, and he was soon commissioned. There he learnt to box, and represented the RAF detachment. After operational training in Northern Ireland, he went on to navigate Catalina flying boats and Liberator long-range reconnaissance bombers in Coastal Command.

In 1945, with a vast surplus of pilots and navigators available for what was becoming a slumped-down postwar Air Force, Osborne had to change his specialisation, and he became an air traffic controller. He thoroughly enjoyed the challenge of "bringing the boys down in bad weather" and his tours included a spell in the Middle East. But, not wishing to stay too long in the same trade and perhaps with a little friendly persuasion from the station medical officer, he had to change specialisation yet again because of poor eyesight. This time he chose to begin a new career in the Equipment Branch, embarking on this course in 1952.

This career took him on several tours before he attended the RAF Staff College, Bracknell, in 1958. This was followed by a posting to HQ 2nd Allied Tactical Air Force at Rheindalen in Germany. In

addition to his normal duties, he was a part-time member of the Anglo-German Technical Commission. As such, he was engaged in the training and resupply of the fledgling post-war German Air Force. Typically he learnt German in his spare time and was thus able to conduct negotiations with the Germans in their own language. At Rheindalen, he also pursued his penchant for amateur dramatics, and he enjoyed taking a leading part in station productions. He also took part twice in the gruelling Nijmegen Marches, covering 100km in four days in full battlekit. He was posted back to the UK in 1961.

Following a tour in the Air Ministry, Osborne was posted in 1963 to RAF Valley in Anglesey where he learnt enough Welsh to become a member of the Holyhead Mixed Choir. He made many Welsh friends, with whom he always kept in touch.

In 1966 he was posted to the headquarters of RAF Maintenance Command at Andover. It was there that he had the responsibility for introducing the RAF's new computerised supply system into the main depots. His team soon became known unofficially as the Black and White Minstrel Show, a title he happily adopted. His work in Maintenance Command was recognised by his appointment as OBE in 1969.

Osborne spent most of the remainder of his career at the Ministry of Defence, with a

well-earned promotion to group captain along the way. During 1975 he was privileged to lead the RAF contingent on his last Nijmegen March, and he retired in 1977.

In retirement, Osborne was not a man to putter in the garden. Apart from taking an Open University degree, he moved into supply training with the Crown Agents where he made an immediate impact, bringing with him from the RAF his experience, communication skills and an infectious sense of humour. In 1984 he was a founder member of Finchfields Consultants which, among other things, worked on training courses for British Aerospace, and he continued to impart his knowledge on supply and control matters to various firms both at home and overseas until he retired in 1991.

When he did finally retire, Osborne was able to continue his hobbies of reading languages, electronics and walking. He will be remembered for his endless energy at work and his sense of humour. As far as his colour was concerned, he always said: "If people retain their prejudices after knowing me for a short while, it's probably my fault for failing to impress my personality on them." It was a credit to the RAF and all those he knew that this was never an issue.

Larry Osborne is survived by his wife Theodora, whom he met before leaving Trinidad, and by three sons.

BEN JOHNSON

Ben Johnson, actor and rodeo rider, died on April 8 aged 77. He was born on June 13, 1918.

BEN JOHNSON'S ease with horses and authentic Oklahoma drawl made him a god-send for directors of westerns, and a rarity among actors, some of whom looked distinctly nervous in a saddle. Like Gary Cooper, he had grown up on a ranch and was an

excellent horseman and cowboy. In the early 1970s he surprised many of those who had underrated his acting abilities when he effortlessly walked away with an Oscar for his role as Sam the Lion in *The Last Picture Show*.

Benjamin Franklin Johnson Jr — known as Uncle Ben — was born in Forker near Pawhuska in Oklahoma. John Ford later called him the best thing to come out of that state

since Will Rogers. Johnson worked on a ranch, and was a seasoned rodeo performer when he rode into Oklahoma City on the back of a palomino to enter a show. A scout for Howard Hughes was impressed by the horse and asked if he could use it in Hughes's new film, *The Outlaw*. Johnson agreed if he could go along as the beast's groom and in the event he looked after 18 of the film's

horses. *The Outlaw*, however, was to gain more notoriety for the bra-less bosom of its leading lady Jane Russell than for the horses, and the censors held it up for six years before allowing it to be released. Johnson's riding skills had by then been noticed and applauded by another former cowboy, Gary Cooper, who casted Johnson's passage into the Screen Actors Guild. Johnson worked for a while as a

stuntman and attracted John Ford's attention on the set of *Fort Apache* where he singlehandedly rounded up a team of runaway horses. Ford liked to use men who did not overact and, just as he encouraged John Wayne to build a career on being John Wayne, so he went to some lengths to find Johnson the right vehicles for his talents. Johnson was photogenic and natural in front of a camera, but modest about his formal acting abilities: "Lord help me if they ever ask me to do anything except be myself."

He supported Wayne in three Ford films — *Three Godfathers*, *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon* (both 1949) and *Rio Grande* (1950) — often literally standing in the Duke's shadow, before being given the lead in Ford's *Wagonmaster* (1950) about the adventures of a Mormon wagon-train heading towards Utah in 1879. There followed supporting roles in countless westerns from the classic *Shane* (1952) to some fairly forgettable examples of the genre for television. He reached a peak in the 1960s, still in Wayne's shadow, but more weathered now, and confident enough of his screen persona to give it a slight twist. Just as Wayne played a paunchy, irritable old mar-

shal in *True Grit*, so Johnson injected his later cowboys with an air of testiness.

Given his past form, he was understandably surprised in the early 1970s to be offered the plum role in a modern film, that of Sam the Lion, owner of the pool hall, diner and picture house in *The Last Picture Show*. Peter Bogdanovich's film was intended as a tribute to film-makers like John Ford and to the dying values of small-town America. Bogdanovich saw Johnson as the repository of such values — independence and strength of character. Ford, by now an old man, had to persuade Johnson to waive his objections to the film's language and nudity and Johnson turned in a strong performance, winning an Oscar for best supporting actor.

He continued to make the odd film thereafter, and received his star on Hollywood's Walk of Fame two years ago. But he spent his last years alone with his mother in Phoenix, Arizona, and was so far detached from the film community that some commentators had already begun to refer to him as the "late Ben Johnson". His wife Carol, whom he married in 1941, predeceased him. There were no children. He is survived by his mother and sister.



Ben Johnson as Sam the Lion in *The Last Picture Show*, 1971

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ON THIS DAY
April 10, 1928
The first stage in the presidential election to be held in November: state, federal, and delegates to the national party conventions are voted for. Tension was high in Chicago where there was a bitter conflict between two factions of the Republican Party.

Variation ineffective after transfer Pedlar traded unlawfully in street

Wilson and Others v St Helens Borough Council

Before Mr Justice Mummery, Mr D. J. Jenkins and Mrs M. E. Sunderland
[Judgment March 28]

Where the operative reason for a variation in terms of employment was a transfer of an undertaking, the variation was ineffective even if the employees had accepted and worked under the varied terms, and the terms of the original contract of employment with the transferor remained in force.

Accordingly, teachers at a school transferred from the county council to the borough council who had accepted new contracts with less favourable terms of employment were entitled to be paid the higher wages payable under their contracts with the county council.

The Employment Appeal Tribunal so held when allowing appeals by Mr R. Wilson and others from the dismissal by a Liverpool Industrial Tribunal last May of their claims against St Helens Borough Council that the council had made unlawful deductions from their wages in contravention of section 1 of the Wages Act 1986.

The tribunal had dismissed the claims on the ground that the employees' agreement to the new contracts had effectively varied their terms of employment and the council were not in breach of the Wages Act in failing to pay what was due to the applicants under their previous contracts.

Regulation 5 of the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of

Employment) Regulations (SI 1981 No 1349) provides:

"(1) ... a relevant transfer shall not operate so as to terminate the contract of employment of any person employed by the transferor in the undertaking ... but any such contract which would otherwise have been terminated by the transfer shall have effect after the transfer as if originally made between the person so employed and the transferee."

Mr Nicholas Randall and Ms Jennifer Eady for the teachers; Mr Alan Wilkie, QC and Mr Simon Gorton for the council.

MR JUSTICE MUMMERY said that the Red Bank Controlled Community Home provided education and care for boys who had committed offences or had other behavioural problems which had led to them being placed in care.

The applicants were employed there as teachers or carers.

The school was formerly owned by trustees and controlled by Lancashire County Council. In October 1992 the school was transferred to the borough council and the applicants started to work pursuant to new contracts.

The applicants claimed before the industrial tribunal that as a result of the transfer of an undertaking they were being paid a reduced salary in breach of the 1981 Regulations and in the circumstances the council were making unlawful deductions from their salaries in contravention of section 1 of the Wages Act.

The tribunal dismissed the claims. It found that although the employees had not expressly

agreed to any variation after the transfer they had worked without protest, accepting the new salaries, job titles and duties. Thus the tribunal found they had affirmed the new contracts.

In *Forrester v Daddys Dance Hall A/S* (1988) ECR 739 the European Court of Justice stressed that the purpose of the acquired rights directive, EC Council Directive 77/187 (Q) 1977 L61/26) was to ensure that the rights resulting from a contract of employment of employees affected by the transfer were safeguarded.

Since that protection was a matter of public policy and independent of the will of the parties to the contract the rules of the directive had to be considered mandatory so that it was not possible to derogate from them in a manner unfavourable to employees. It followed that the rights conferred on employees could not be restricted even with their consent.

The industrial tribunal had erred in law in holding there had been an effective variation in the terms of employment so as to preclude them from making claims under the 1986 Act.

An unauthorised deduction from wages was a contravention of section 1 of the Wages Act. The crucial question was what was the total amount of the wages properly payable to the employee?

Was it, as the employees contended, what was due to them under the terms of their contracts with the county council, or was it, as the borough council contended, what was due to them under the

terms of their employment with them which contained variations of the previous terms?

It was common ground that the provisions of the 1981 Regulations had to be construed, if it were possible to do so without distortion of language, to conform with the provisions of the directive.

The crucial point was the identity of the reason for the alteration of the terms of employment which the employees had with the county council. The terms of regulation 5(1) were mandatory protection for employees on a transfer.

The European Court had held in *Daddys Dance Hall* that the policy of the directive, and therefore of the implementing 1981 Regulations, precluded even a consensual variation in the terms of the contract if the transfer of the undertaking was the reason for the variation.

It was clear from the findings of fact by the tribunal that the reason for the alteration was the transfer. The law, surprising though it might be to the English legal tradition, was clear.

If the operative reason for the variation was the transfer of the undertaking, then the variation would be ineffective. That was the position in the present case and the terms of employment with the county council remained in force.

The appeal would be allowed and the matter remitted to the tribunal to determine individual entitlement.

Solicitors: Reynolds Porter Chamberlain; Brian Thompson & Partners, Liverpool; Mrs Vivien Horne, St Helens.

Stevens Borough Council v Wright

Before Lord Justice Leggatt and Sir Iain Gidwell
[Judgment April 2]

A person who stood in one place for an hour selling goods from a bag at his feet and attracting people's attention to come to him to buy, was selling from a pitch and was not acting as a pedlar within the meaning of section 3 of the Pedlars Act 1871, despite holding a pedlar's certificate.

Accordingly, he was not exempt from the prohibition against street trading contained in paragraph 10(1) of Schedule 4 to the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982, by virtue of paragraph 1(2) of Schedule 4.

The absence of a stall was not determinative of the question whether the seller was acting as a pedlar rather than a street trader.

The Queen's Bench Divisional Court so held, allowing Stevens Borough Council's appeal by case stated from the decision of the St Helens Justices who, on February 1995, acquitted Mervyn Wright of engaging in street trading in a prohibited street, contrary to paragraph 10(1) of Schedule 4 to the 1982 Act.

Schedule 4 to the 1982 Act provides: "(1) ... 'street trading' means, subject to sub-paragraph (2) below, the selling or exposing or offering for sale of any article ... in a street."

"(2) The following are not street trading for the purposes of this Schedule—(a) trading by a person acting as a pedlar under the authority of a pedlar's certificate granted under the Pedlars Act 1871 ..."

Mr Simon Bird for the council; the defendant did not appear and was not represented.

LORD JUSTICE LEGGATT said that the term "pedlar" was defined in section 3 of the 1871 Act as "any hawkier, pedlar, petty chapman, hawker, master of mules, mender of chairs, or other person who, without any horse or other beast drawing burden, travels and trades on foot and goes from town to town or to other men's houses, carrying to sell or exposing for sale any goods, wares or merchandise, or procuring orders for goods, wares or merchandise immediately to be delivered, or selling or offering for sale his skill in handicraft ..."

The justices found that the defendant had a valid pedlar's certificate that on the relevant date he was in a prohibited street for two and a half hours; that he was stationary for at least an hour, selling wrapping paper from a large shopping bag at his feet; and that the bag had a sign on its side and the defendant called out to passers-by to attract their attention.

The justices were thereby satisfied saying that the defendant

had set up a pitch from which to sell his wares.

After being referred to *Watson v Molloy* (1958) 1 WLR 1050, the justices concluded that the trading practices of the defendant were that of a pedlar and that he fell within the proviso of paragraph 1(2) of Schedule 4 to the 1982 Act. In so doing they found it material that he was not trading from a stall and that he was entitled to stop to trade.

The headline in *Watson v Molloy* emphasised that a pedlar was not a person who sold from a stall. But that was not necessarily implicit in the decision. Although the traders in that case made use of a stall, the court did not indicate that that fact was in any way determinative.

Whereas the use of a stall was not determinative, the fact that a seller equipped himself with a stall, stand, or bag by which his goods were borne might indicate an intention to set up a pitch from which his business could be conducted.

In determining the nature of the seller's trading practices and the nature of his conduct while stationary for the purposes of selling it was necessary to consider the length of time for which a person was in one place and what he did while in that place.

His Lordship derived little assistance from aphorisms about "travelling to trade".

Sir Iain Gidwell agreed.

Solicitors: Mr Christopher Chapman, St Helens.

To be a pedlar a person did not have to travel and trade simultaneously; he did not have to be in motion while selling. A pedlar was an itinerant or peripatetic seller who was travelling when not selling.

The use of a stall or stand might indicate an intention to remain longer than was necessary to effect a sale to an individual.

The justices justified their decision that the defendant was a pedlar because he was not trading from a stall. The evidence was that the defendant had established a pitch where he remained for at least an hour.

In the present case the defendant was not waiting round to sell but selling from a pitch from which he attracted people's attention. He was not a pedlar and was not entitled to the benefit of the exemption from the prohibition against street trading.

The appeal would accordingly be allowed. The court had not been asked to remit the case to the justices.

Sir Iain Gidwell agreed.

Solicitors: Mr Christopher Chapman, St Helens.

Chapman, St Helens.

Charges should reflect gravity

Regina v Clark (Raymond Dennis)

Where in the case of sexual offences the acts complained of constituted a regular course of conduct over some time, prosecutors should charge sufficient offences fairly to reflect the gravity of the offending.

The Court of Appeal, Criminal Division (Lord Justice Henry, Mr Justice Allott and Mr Justice Owen) so held on February 28 in a reserved judgment, allowing the appeal against sentence of Raymond Dennis Clark, who had been convicted at Isleworth Crown Court (Judge Miller and a jury) on a single count of indecent assault on a male person and was sentenced to five years imprisonment. The sentence was reduced to two years.

LORD JUSTICE HENRY said

that the single count with which the appellant had been charged had been put forward as a specimen or sample count, reflecting a series of offences over the period in question. The appellant never at any time admitted any sexual offence within the period covered by the indictment. Counsel for the appellant submitted that the judge was not entitled to sentence on the basis of a series of offences.

Section 31(2) of the Criminal Justice Act 1991 defined offences associated with the offence charged as being limited to offences of which the offender was convicted, or admitted and requested the court to take into consideration when sentencing.

His Lordship suggested that prosecutors should charge sufficient offences fairly to reflect the criminality of the offending.

Offences against environment

Shanks McEwan (Midlands) Ltd v Wrexham Maelor Borough Council

Any person and not only the licence holder was liable to prosecution for contravention of a condition attached to a waste management licence. The scheme of the Act contemplated the person who was in actual occupation of the site. In practice that was the operator. In the present case the wording of the licence reflected the statutory dichotomy between the licence holder and the operator. The condition which was the subject of the charge related to operational matters.

For a person to contravene any condition of a licence it was necessary for that person to be the person by whom the offence was committed. The licence holder who was not the operator could not be guilty of the offence.

LORD JUSTICE LEGGATT said that section 33(6) of the 1990 Act, by using the words "a person" rendered liable to prosecution anyone who was in contravention of a condition of a waste management licence. The scheme of the Act contemplated the person who was in actual occupation of the site. In practice that was the operator. In the present case the wording of the licence reflected the statutory dichotomy between the licence holder and the operator. The condition which was the subject of the charge related to operational matters.

For a person to contravene any condition of a licence it was necessary for that person to be the person by whom the offence was committed. The licence holder who was not the operator could not be guilty of the offence.

Lifestyle relevance in drug possession case

Regina v Scott

Before Lord Justice Staughton, Mr Justice Macpherson of Cluny and Judge Gower
[Judgment March 21]

Special facts in a case might affect the principle that evidence of money or lifestyle was irrelevant on a charge of possessing drugs with intent to supply, where the only issue was possession.

Their Lordships so stated when dismissing the appeal of John David Scott against his conviction on September 14, 1994 in Preston Crown Court (Judge Townend and a jury) of possessing class B and class C drugs, amphetamine and temazepam, with intent to supply.

Mr Perry Wood, assigned by the Registrar of Criminal Appeals, for the Crown.

LORD JUSTICE STAUGHTON, giving the reserved judgment of the court, said that in February 1993 police officers stopped a car. The appellant was in the front passenger seat and another man, Jackson, in the back with a holdall on his knees. The officers found a black bin liner near where Jackson was sitting.

The holdall contained 447gm of amphetamine with a street value of about £4,470. The bin liner contained 284 temazepam tablets with a street value of £2 to £5 each and polythene bags containing 292gm of amphetamine with a street value of about £2,920.

When interviewed, the appellant denied all knowledge of the drugs. Jackson admitted knowing that the holdall contained drugs and said that he was looking after it for the appellant. He said he knew nothing about the bin liner or its contents.

At the time of his arrest the appellant had £311 on him; Jackson had only 58 pence. Between November 11, 1992 and February 5, 1993 Scott had paid sums totalling £12,250 into three building societies.

Evidence was adduced at trial that Scott's house had been searched on two occasions. Scales and other paraphernalia such as bags containing amphetamine were found.

Once again the court was concerned with the question whether, and if so how, possession of money was relevant on a charge of

possessing drugs with intent to supply.

Their Lordships had been referred to 12 decisions in the Court of Appeal from May 1993 to June 1995, the earliest of which was *R v Wright* (1994) Crim LR 53 and the latest *R v Halpin* (1995) Crim LR 112.

Two features of the present case made it unusual if not unique in the catalogue of the last few years: 1 From the start of the trial it was only possession that was in dispute, not the intent to supply, which could be readily inferred from the quantities of drugs found.

2 There was in effect a cut-throat defence.

What featured in all of the 12 cases referred to was money. Since the issue in the present case was possession, their Lordships readily accepted that following the decision in *Halpin*, evidence of money or lifestyle and other extraneous matters would in the ordinary way have been irrelevant. But there were special facts which were said to lead to a different conclusion.

First, there was a close match between the amphetamine found

in the car and that in the appellant's house. Second, there were similarities between the plastic bags in the car and those in the house. In their Lordships' judgment that evidence was relevant.

Whether the judge should have excluded it from the prosecution case because its prejudicial effect exceeded its probative value did not matter, since counsel for the appellant, Jackson, was entitled to rely on all the disputed evidence as affecting Scott's credibility.

That included evidence of Scott's previous conviction for possessing amphetamine and also the money, scales and other paraphernalia. To the extent that those items tended to show that he had been a possessor and supplier of drugs in the past, as they certainly did, they could be relied on by Jackson as reflecting on Scott's credibility.

At the end of the day no evidence was admitted which should not have been before the jury for one reason or another, and the judge's summing up, while not perfect, was in no way unfair. The conviction was not unsafe.

Solicitors: Crown Prosecution Service, Burnley.

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Why has the BBC been so slow to capitalise on an opportunity — which has always existed — to increase its revenue?

A licence to make more money



BRENDA MADDOX

Stepping over the threshold of my second home in Wales (the Land of My Father-in-Law, let me hasten to say), I trod on the dusty envelope delivered through the cat flap by the postman. A delicately worded missive, it came from the TV Licensing Centre in Bristol. It was addressed to those residing where they may be using television "but do not have a separate licence by the licence at another (main) address".

I paid up. Indeed, we tried to pay when we first got the place, assuming that a second roof required a second licence. Positively not, came the official response. Unless we were inhabiting two houses simultaneously and watching row sets at once, one licence did for both. Now it does so no longer.

Some are outraged at this double levy. Not me. With the rise of satellite TV that costs well over £200 a year, and with the unstop-

public emergence of pay-per-view, the licence fee looks a modest tariff for quite a lot.

My question is why the BBC took so long to spot this obvious source of new revenue? Apparently the Beeb woke up only after *Which?* alerted those head-eyed people who read the small print in search of their consumer rights that they might be entitled to a refund on their second licence.

Though all refunds already promised will be paid, the BBC is now due for a modest windfall. With an estimated 38,000 households now required to buy a second colour licence at the new rate (since this month of £89.50, it will rake in an extra £3,400,000 a year. What a pity it did not spot the opportunity years ago.

It is a greater pity the BBC has allowed so much human misery to be inflicted in its name on those who cannot afford to pay the fine for non-payment of the licence fee. Last week a television researcher phoned me to ask whether I were a feminist (they needed one for a discussion). But I was too "on the one hand, on the other hand" to qualify. He should have rung a day later, after I learnt the statistics on women jailed for failing to pay TV fines.

What except a gross bias against the female can explain the fact that women are eight times as likely to be jailed for this offence as are men? In 1995, Prison Service figures show, 19,341 men were convicted of fine defaulting. Of these, 1,401 went to prison. Of the

508 women found guilty of the same offence, 241 were locked up — hives in arms, children being put into care and offers to pay by small instalments notwithstanding. The maximum penalty for non-payment is £1,000 but the fines in these hardship cases were as low

as £70. The plight of these jailed defaulters worked its way not only into the plot of *Coronation Street* but even melted the heart of Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, who now says that imprisonment will be used only in exceptional circumstances. But Virginia Bonomey, the Heritage Secretary, tears that without the criminal penalties, mass evasion will result.

Not true, surely? Fines and community service work as a deterrent for other civil offences. Here is a task for Sir Christopher Bland, the BBC's new, superbly bright chairman: designing a socially useful penance for fee evaders. How about reading to the blind? Unless, that is, the blind are fee-evaders themselves. This is no

joke. There is a special discount on the television licence for the registered blind: £1.25.

Sir Christopher is now puzzling how best to use his five-year term. The danger is that, with his depth of commercial experience, he will throw his energies into pushing the BBC to earn more money. He should instead dedicate himself to saving the licence fee, which the new BBC charter guarantees for only five years.

One simple step would be to rename the damned thing. Either add "and radio" to the fee or delete "television". As it stands, "TV licence" is a misnomer, encouraging those who watch only TV but also listen to BBC Radio 1 to feel cheated.

Then he might declare some

home truths, such as the following:

- There is no visible substitute for it. Some day the BBC will be able to scramble its services, even radio, so that only subscribers will pay. But not soon.
- The BBC will never be able to earn more than pin money from its commercial operations.
- The BBC is an essential service. The social services should assist those who cannot afford it.
- If more of the estimated 1.8 million evaders (compared with 21 million payers) were caught, the BBC could afford to be more generous to those for whom the fee is a hardship.

"Does not suffer fools gladly" is the description most frequently applied to Sir Christopher. Who, therefore, is better qualified to proclaim from on high the plainest truths of all? That £89.50 a year is not enough and that those who say they never watch nor listen to the BBC are probably lying.

How to sell the euro

Simon Brooke on the advertising challenge of a single currency

The passion and the complex issues surrounding the UK's possible participation in a European single currency prove beyond doubt that selling a political message is not, as was once suggested, basically like selling soap powder.

The Times asked a number of leading advertising agencies and public relations consultants to imagine that the referendum on Britain's adoption of the euro was under way and that they had been retained by either the "yes" or the "no" camps to produce advertisements and to develop a communications strategy.

Britain's single currency opt-out means that the Treasury has "no plans as yet" to devise a communications programme, and the European Commission "has decided that information should be demand-led, rather than in the form of an active programme". However, across Europe governments are already appointing communications companies to explain to the public what a single currency means and how it will benefit them.

In Paris the corporate advertising agency Kendo has been retained by the French Ministry of Economics to produce a long-term communications programme until the year 2002. The German federal Government has appointed advertising agency Von Mannstein Werbeagentur to develop a DM15 million (£6.6 million) media campaign breaking at the end of May.



How McCann-Erickson would tackle a pro-European single currency campaign in the run-up to a referendum

THE EURO.
SO SIMPLE A CHILD CAN UNDERSTAND IT.

WHAT ABOUT THE REST OF US?

At last, money talks the same language.

"It's going to be the biggest and most difficult job for any advertising agency for at least the past ten years," says Kate Marber, European development director at TBWA in London. "Currency is the brand of all brands, it's a national touchstone, and at a time when people feel that their national identity is being stripped away they'll be loath to lose it." She believes that to educate and reassure people, the campaign must be "global" — "in other words, it will need Europe-wide co-ordination but must be able to tap into the concerns of the man or woman in the street."

David Longman, marketing director at McCann-Erickson, also highlights the importance of bringing issues down to the level of ordinary people. "We discovered that business doesn't like currency fluctuations, and once the public understand that, they can see the value of a single currency."

However, McCann, a decidedly pro-European agency whose advertising campaign to raise funds and awareness for the cross-party European

'Currency is the brand of all brands'

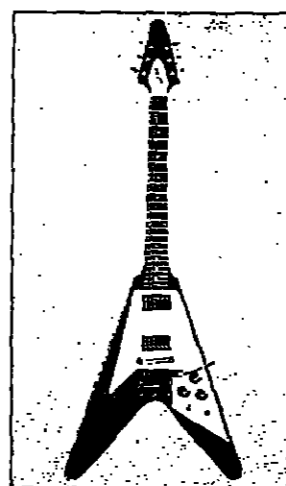
APCO UK would also like to fight a positive campaign. "We could have the paradoxical situation of the 'yeses' running a negative campaign along the lines of the world will come to an end if we stay out. I would

therefore favour a campaign showing that we can have a successful future outside a single currency. This will need to be supported by personal endorsements from prominent industrialists, customers of British export, other European political figures and people who can demonstrate that Britain can continue to prosper even if the others go ahead without us."

However, most commentators note that many London advertising and PR agencies will be hoping that Britain does accept the euro, if only for the business opportunities it brings.

Bonhams bids for the masses

One of Britain's auction houses is dusting down its snooty image. Alex Benady reports



Jimi Hendrix's guitar fetched £50,600

Why are people still intimidated by the leading auctioneers, often preferring even to take their treasures to the BBC's *Antiques Roadshow*? It is because they see the big auction houses as snooty and patronising.

But now Bonhams — one of Britain's "big four" auctioneers, along with Sotheby's, Christie's and Phillips — wants to open up the dusty world of the UK auction industry and gain access to what it sees as a vast and virtually untapped market.

Veronica Kruger, Bonhams' director of marketing, says: "The rational advantages of buying at auction are immense. You can buy good quality furniture for less than shop prices, and instead of the value slumping when you get it home, it will probably appreciate. Yet about 98 per cent of the population never use auctions."

The comparison with retailers is key to the Bonhams approach. The UK auction industry is worth about £1 billion a year. The furniture industry is worth £9 billion and serves the entire adult population, so Bonhams plans to gain access to that more valuable and populous marketplace by adopting many of its conventions. It is now promoting itself on a platform of openness, informality and enthusiastic service — just like the better furniture stores.

The process has involved Bonhams in a complete cultural overhaul. Gone is the feel of a gentleman's club at its Knightsbridge showroom. "The building," says Ms Kruger, "is now deliberately very

airy and inviting. It is stylish without being overbearing."

And in an initiative that will be appreciated by anybody who has experienced the snooty indifference of some of the other auctioneers, all staff from heads of department to porters are now trained to be courteous and sympathetic to everybody. "No matter how dim their questions may seem," says Ms Kruger.

The point is to make the whole experience as un-intimidating as possible for both buyers and sellers. Buyers in particular need reassurance — many people still believe the old canard that if you sneeze at an auction you could accidentally land yourself with an expensive lot.

To ensure that working people as well as the very rich and the antiques trade get a look in, viewing times are increasingly out of office hours. Bonhams' Knights-

bridge now opens at 7.30 on Tuesday mornings while Bonhams Chelsea has viewing all day on Sunday — to the accompaniment of a pianist.

These small things are evidence of an ethos summed up in the slogan which will run in all its marketing material, devised by newly appointed advertising agency Adventus — "You're worth more to us."

Despite being one of the big four, Bonhams has a turnover of only £40 million compared with the £1 billion worldwide of Sotheby's and Christie's, and the £90 million of Phillips. Ms Kruger says: "Because we are smaller every lot is relatively more important to us. And in the case of, say, a £100,000 lot, which would be medium size for the others, we really do pull out all the stops."

Bonhams has carved out a specialist market for itself in buoyant sectors such as contemporary ceramics, which are too small for the bigger auctioneers to cover in depth. It also pioneered themed auctions — "Cats and Dogs in Art" was timed to coincide with Crufts.

Technology is playing an important role in the Bonhams renaissance. It was one of the first to put its catalogues on CD-ROM, and now plans to exploit its database in a far more sophisticated manner to produce buyers and sellers.

The efforts by Bonhams to expand the joys of buying at auction into the mid market seem to be working. Ms Kruger says: "We are increasingly getting young professional couples buying just to furnish their homes."

Nothing is sacred to a news editor

The 'row' over Tony Blair's religious views was never more than a news stunt, says Roy Greenslade

Perhaps Labour's renowned spin-doctors will need to take holy orders. Then again, would a team of spin-doctors have foreseen the impact of Tony Blair talking candidly to a newspaper about his religious beliefs? Surely, they would not have imagined the press turning Mr Blair's perfectly straight-forward interview into a front-page story?

Yet that is what came to pass. Mr Blair's seemingly unsensational views on Christianity, as related to *The Sunday Telegraph*, were translated into an attack on the Tory party. He was accused of being "holier than

thou" (*Daily Mail* and *Daily Express*), of being "embroidered in a row" (*The Daily Telegraph*) or, more hyperbolically, "a fierce political storm" (*Daily Mail*), having "enraged Tories" (*The Times*) and "provoked furious Tory criticism" (*The Guardian*).

At times such as these, to heed the advice of my old Sunday school teacher, it is wise to sit quietly in a corner and read the words of the scribes carefully until one has divined the meaning. It proved instructive. The storm was of the tea-cup variety. The fury was decidedly synthetic. It was, according to the teachings of every decent news

editor I have known, a non-story.

The articles all depended on a journalistic interpretation of a single quote from Mr Blair: "My view of Christian values led me to oppose what I perceived to be the narrow self-interest that Conservatism — particularly its modern, more right-wing form — represents." The essentially personal nature of this observation was clear because, at the outset of his testament, Mr Blair said unequivocally: "I do not believe that Christians should only vote Labour."

But that did not stop *The Sunday Telegraph* from kicking-starting the weekend's news



Blair "sensation" — but the excitement was largely bogus

agenda by making mischief. Not content with landing its exclusive, it promoted the piece with a front-page story designed to attract publicity. It claimed that Mr Blair's "comments provoked fury among senior Tories". Yet it canvassed opinion from two of

them — the party chairman Brian Mawhinney and Ann Widdecombe, the Home Office Minister — before they had a chance to read the article.

It would be interesting to know exactly how the reporters worded their questions. Did they quote Mr Blair verbatim? How many of his 1,500 words did they recite? Did they suggest, as the introduction to their story said, that Mr Blair argued that "Conservatism is incompatible with Christianity"? In other words, did journalists elicit their quotes based on a misrepresentation of what Mr Blair had said?

Whatever the case, Dr Mawhinney's criticism was muted and Ms Widdecombe's was oblique. Yet it was enough to have their names, and the so-called row undoubtedly helped *The Sunday Telegraph* to win airtime on television and radio news bulletins on Sunday. Then the dailies weighed in.

It was noticeable that the same Mawhinney and Widdecombe quotes were the basis of the new "row" stories. Three Tory backbenchers also joined

in, though all had a retracted feel to them. The claims moved yet further from the truth: the Labour Party was "the natural home of Christian values", claimed the *Daily Mail*, while *The Daily Telegraph* alleged he had "made a connection between his faith and his party allegiance".

Then the leader writers and commentators, building on the foundation of inaccuracy, wrought their tablets of stone. Simon Heffer, in the *Mail*, called Mr Blair naive and asserted that his "grasp of theology is at an elementary level of philosophy".

The Daily Express thought Mr Blair "a little unctuous" but the paper showed commendable, and unusual, fairness by publishing adjacent to its leader the full text of his *Sunday Telegraph* article. *The Sun*, by contrast, virtually ignored the whole episode.

But the criticism did not come exclusively from the Right. *The Independent's* leader was probably the most venomous of all: "That he [Blair] has faith is well and good but he must not insult our intelligence with platitudes about gospel socialism and an exegesis which ignores the entire chequered history of the Christian Church."

Part of the reason for the outbreak of this preposterous pseudo-row was, ironically, the fact that it was Easter: there is often a desperation in newspapers about finding any story beyond routine Bank Holiday travel dramas. But Mr Blair is surely experienced enough by now to understand that everything he says, on any topic, is bound to attract press attention.

He might well have thought he was safe in making a deeply personal, sensitive statement which would be, in his eyes, politically neutral. Now he knows: for the British press, nothing, not even one's religious beliefs, is sacred.

THE TIMES / DILLONS FORUM

Why we exist



Richard Dawkins

RICHARD DAWKINS, the controversial biologist, will argue at a *Times/Dillons* forum that Darwin has the answers to all Nature's complexities.

The forum, on April 25, marks the publication of Professor Dawkins' book, *Climbing Mount Improbable* (Viking, £20). He will discuss the difference between accident and design in Nature and show how DNA has progressed through geological time.

Chaired by Sir John Maddox, the former editor of *Nature*, the forum will be held at the Institute of Education, 20 Bedford Way, London WC1, starting at 7.30pm. Tickets at £10 (concessions £7.50), which include £3 off the price of Professor Dawkins' book, are available by phoning 0171-915 6613, by faxing the coupon below on 0171-915 6611, or by sending the coupon and your remittance to Dillons, 82 Gower Street, London WC1E 6EQ, where tickets can also be purchased.

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A real switch-off

TEN million viewers cannot be wrong, of course, but still the heart does not leap on learning that *Noel's House Party* is No 3 in the Top 20 of light entertainment. *Brigid Callaghan* writes. This is a category which includes sitcoms as well as game shows and family shows (families, hang your heads in shame) and yet the only sitcom featured in the Top 20 which the honest viewer could say made them laugh a lot is *Absolutely Fabulous*. Saturday is the top night for "light": my advice, go out.

THE TIMES TOP 20: LIGHT ENTERTAINMENT									
March 18 to March 24, 1996									
Programme	Date	Time	Chan	Produce	Game	Audience (M)	All 4+		
1 The National Lottery Live	Sat 24	19.51	BBC1	BBC	Special Event	14.4			
2 You've Been Framed	Sun 24	19.22	ITV	Granada Television	Family Show	11.1			
3 Noel's House Party	Sat 23	19.01	BBC1	BBC	Family Show	10.9			
4 Sporn in Their Eyes	Sat 23	20.05	ITV	Granada Television	Family Show	10.8			
5 Play Your Cards Right	Fri 22	18.59	ITV	Granada Television	Game Show	10.2			
6 Talking Telephone Numbers	Mon 18	18.50	ITV	Granada Television	Family Show	10.1			
7 Berrymore	Sat 23	19.08	ITV	LWT	Family Show	8.0			
8 Big Break	Fri 22	20.30	BBC1	BBC	Game Show	7.8			
9 A Question Of Sport	Sun 24	21.28	BBC1	BBC	Game Show	7.5			
10 Absolutely Fabulous	Wed 20	20.08	BBC1	Alpha Productions	Sit-com	7.1			
11 Birds Of A Feather	Wed 20	19.50	BBC1	BBC	Comedy	6.8			
12 Les Dawson: The Entertainer	Thu 21	20.30	BBC1	BBC	Family Show	6.8			
13 Auntie's Sporting Bloomsday	Fri 22	20.30	ITV	Central Television	Sit-com	6.7			
14 The Upper Hand	Wed 20	22.35	BBC1	Telcel Productions	Game Show	6.5			
15 They Think It's All Over	Tue 19	20.31	ITV	Carlton UK	Game Show	6.5			
16 Married For Life	Mon 18	19.01	BBC1	Reg Grundy Productions	Family Show	6.2			
17 Elemental	Sat 23	18.15	ITV	Granada Television	Family Show	6.1			
18 The Shane Richie Experience	Wed 20	21.53	ITV	Truwood	Game Show	6.1			
19 Odds On	Sat 23	17.44	ITV	Action Time	Game Show	5.9			
20 Catchphrase									

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Retail sales growth 'slowed in March'

By JANET BUSH, ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

BRITISH consumers appear more confident and willing to spend more freely but the pace of growth of retail sales slowed in March, according to the distributive trades survey from the Confederation of British Industry, out today.

This is the sixth successive month in which the number of retailers reporting an increase in business, rather than a fall, compared favourably with the situation a year before.

But March saw the difference between those enjoying an upturn and those suffering a downturn narrow to 27 per cent from 30 per cent in February.

Expectations for sales this month have also fallen back. In February, the proportion of those expecting further strong growth in sales over the next month, minus those expecting a decline, had been 45 per cent. That figure in today's survey

has dropped to 42 per cent. The March survey also shows that retail sales are regarded as only just above average for the time of year.

Sudhir Junankar, the CBI's associate director of economic analysis, said: "Retailers had expected a faster pace of growth in March and the survey indicates that the underlying three monthly growth trend seems to be pausing even though retailers still consider sales to be marginally above average for the time of year."

He said that retailers were still confident that sales would pick up in April but that this would depend on a stronger Easter than last year.

Kate Barker, chief economist at the CBI, said in her submission to the report of the Chancellor's independent panel of forecasters yesterday that consumer spending was the great unknown of current forecasts of the domestic economy. She is predicting an increase in consumer spending this year of some 2.3 per cent, compared with the Treasury's forecast of 3.5 per cent.

The CBI report today says that all sectors of the high street saw more buoyant trading in March than they did last year, apart from specialist food and footwear and leather shops. Retailers with the closest links to the housing market did well. Hardware, china and DIY shops reported the biggest jumps in business. This appears to back up other anecdotal evidence and recent mortgage lending figures which suggest that the housing market is beginning to show genuine signs of recovery.

In the motor trade, the CBI reported that there was only a modest rise in sales in March and that sales are still considered to be below average. Motor dealers are hoping for a slight pick up in April.



Barker: spending forecast

Stocks of US unsold goods fall

By OUR CITY STAFF

STOCKS of unsold goods on wholesalers' shelves in America fell in February for the first time in nearly two years, the Commerce Department reported yesterday, signalling progress in whittling down overstocked inventories.

Total inventories fell 0.2 per cent to a seasonally adjusted \$255.8 billion, after a revised increase of 0.6 per cent in January. It was the first monthly decline in wholesale inventories since a 0.5 per cent fall in March 1994, department officials said.

The decline in February inventories was evident in reduced stocks of durable goods, including metals and minerals, electrical products and professional and commercial goods. Inventories of non-durable goods, such as oil and farm-product raw materials also fell, the department said.

Big stockpiles of unsold goods that forced manufacturers to hold back production were cited as a drag on economic growth through much of last year. The report said the "inventory correction" may finally be coming to an end.

TOURIST RATES

	Bank Buys	Bank Sells
Australia \$	2.04	1.88
Austria Sch	16.85	15.45
Belgium Fr	49.58	45.28
Canada \$	2.184	2.024
Cyprus Cyp£	0.751	0.686
Denmark Kr	9.37	8.57
Finland Mk	7.67	7.02
France Fr	6.14	7.49
Germany Dm	2.42	2.21
Greece Dr	388.00	363.00
Hong Kong \$	12.47	11.47
Ireland Pt	1.02	0.94
Israel Sh	9.100	4.3900
Italy Lit	2502.00	2348.00
Japan Yen	179.50	163.50
Malta £	0.585	0.538
Netherlands Gld	2.687	2.457
New Zealand \$	2.39	2.17
Norway Kr	10.42	9.52
Portugal Esc	244.50	226.00
S Africa Rd	6.82	6.02
Spain Ptas	162.50	163.50
Sweden Kr	10.85	10.05
Switzerland Fr	1.96	1.78
Turkey Lira	114.00	106.00
USA \$	1.827	1.497

Rates for small denomination bank notes only as supplied by Barclays Bank PLC. Different rates apply to travellers' cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.



David Witt with Tim Dewhurst, chairman, centre, and Scott Beattie, finance director

British Coal's doctor wins RJB health work

By MARIANNE CURPHEY

BRITISH COAL'S former director of occupational health has won a five-year private contract to provide health screening for RJB Mining, Britain's biggest coal producer.

Dr Siyami Afacan is chief executive and medical director of Business Healthcare Limited (BHL), which was the only operator to be invited by RJB Mining to bid for the contract. Neither Bupa, the largest healthcare provider in Britain, nor Norwich Union, were involved in the negotiations.

RJB bought the bulk of the collieries and open-cast sites formerly owned by British Coal for £815 million in April last year.

RJB declined yesterday to disclose the value of the contract. The new healthcare company, which is based in

Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, is also headed by Bob Ellis and Derek Smallwood, formerly the managing director and the finance director of Coal Products Ltd, the British Coal smokeless fuels subsidiary that was sold to its own management buyout team.

The company will provide health screening and monitoring for all 9,500 RJB employees, and will undertake medical examinations of new entrants, advice on first-aid training, X-rays of employees at four-yearly intervals and a range of other health services.

BHL, which is operating from a new headquarters in Mansfield, was not available for comment yesterday. The company was established while the privatisation of British Coal was being finalised and already serves privatised collieries, manufacturers,

local authorities and government departments.

It has mobile X-ray units and health screening units, permitting it to provide a workplace service throughout the United Kingdom, and a team of doctors, nurses and radiographers.

A spokesman for RJB confirmed that the service had not been put out to tender.

He said: "Between the privatisation of British Coal last January and today's announcement, BHL has been running a transitional service and we are happy that we have been able to provide some continuity."

"This is one of a number of former British Coal services now run by private companies — the others include public relations and mines rescue. RJB has been very happy with the transitional service."

Profits and investment jump at Dewhurst

By SARAH BAGNALL

DEWHURST, a supplier of clothing and toiletries to Marks & Spencer, plans to step up its investment by a massive 80 per cent to about £15 million in the current year.

The news came as the company revealed a sharp leap in pre-tax profits from £17 million to £22.3 million in the year to January 12. Sales of £278.9 million were up from £247.3 million last time.

The planned capital expenditure programme, which represents 67 per cent of last year's pre-tax profits, is being funded out of the group's cash resources.

Net cash stood at £22.3 million at the year end, up £4.2 million from last time.

David Witt, chief executive, said the bulk of the current year's capital expenditure is to fund the group's investment in offshore manufacturing. Dewhurst is building factories in areas such as Morocco and the Far East in order to have greater control over supply and so it can respond swiftly to shifts in demand and at a lower unit cost. The company, which supplies all its clothing and 85 per cent of its overall sales to M&S, lifted the final dividend from 2p to 2.6p, making a total for the year of 3.6p, compared to 2.65p last time.

The dividend, due for payment on July 1, is being paid out of earnings of 11.61p a share, up from 8.91p last time. The shares fell 3p to close at 186p.

Tempus, page 28

IBM set for licence pact with Apple

By OUR CITY STAFF

IBM is close to signing a pact with Apple Computers to license the Macintosh operating system.

The agreement is likely to be signed in the next few days with the IBM unit that develops the PowerPC chip and would be similar to a pact that Apple signed in February with Motorola's computer systems unit, it is understood.

The pact would be another move in Apple's aggressive push to license its Macintosh operating system, one of the key goals set by Gil Amelio, Apple's new chief executive, when he took over the troubled computer maker in early February.

IBM will not build Macintosh clones but will have the right to sub-license the Mac system to other makers seeking to develop Mac clones based on the PowerPC chip.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Chargeurs out of MGM bidding

CHARGEURS, the French media and industrial group, is dropping out of the running to buy Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Inc. the Hollywood film studio that the French Government has put on the auction block. The French state became the improbable owner of MGM through the ill-fated expansion spree of Credit Lyonnais, the state-owned bank. Sources close to the sale have said there is no official asking price for MGM, famed for its roaring lion logo.

The Government is reported to be hoping to get between \$1.5 billion to \$2 billion, and possibly more, to recoup some of the \$2.5 billion which Credit Lyonnais sunk into the studio. The bank acquired MGM in 1992 when Giancarlo Parretti, the Italian financier and its then owner, defaulted on loans. Chargeurs' decision came after it examined the MGM sale prospectus. It leaves PolyGram, the music and film company, as the only potential European suitor.

BT prices debate

BT and Ofel, the telecommunications regulator, are to debate the price controls that will determine the future profitability of BT's domestic operations at a public hearing at London University's Senate House on April 17. Ofel has proposed that BT reduces its prices by between 5 and 9 per cent, less allowance for retail price inflation, between mid-1997, when the current cap expires, and 2001. The exact level of the new price cap will depend on factors such as BT's cost of capital and the expected growth in the telecoms market.

Halcyon receivership

HALCYON RETAIL, a specialist retailer of Benetton goods, has gone into receivership. Halcyon employs 100 staff and traded under the banner "United Colours of Benetton" out of eight outlets in London and the South East. Scott Barnes, head of corporate recovery at Grant Thornton and joint receiver to Halcyon, said: "We intend to continue to trade whilst a potential purchaser is sought." Halcyon lost £400,000 in the year to August 27 and has continued to lose money. Full-year turnover was forecast at £3.7 million.

Nissan names president

NISSAN, Japan's second largest carmaker, named a new president yesterday who said he wanted a leaner, meaner company able to cope better with difficult business conditions. Yoshiyuki Hanawa is currently executive vice president. The current president, Yoshifumi Tsuji, who becomes chairman, said Mr Hanawa, 62, was named new president to bring younger blood and vigour to the top management. Nissan suffered losses in each of the past three years but is expected to make a profit in the year to March 31, 1996.

Panther bid deadline

PANTHER SECURITIES, the quoted property company, has until the weekend to raise its £6.8 million partial takeover offer for Elys, the Wimbledon-based department store. Panther has launched an unusual two-tier cash offer for Elys, comprising 750p for a third of the shares and 485p for the balance. It has, however, been blocked from acquiring all of Elys' equity as three of the department store's trustees, representing 39.17 per cent of the equity, have rejected the offer. Elys shares stand at 600p, Panther's at 63p.

Low & Bonar outbid

LOW & BONAR, the UK packaging and plastics company, has been outbid in its attempt to acquire Rotronics Manufacturing, a US plastics business. In February L&B announced it had reached agreement in principle to buy all the outstanding shares in Rotronics for \$2.34 per share in cash, valuing the business at \$33 million. The deal was subject to contract, completion of due diligence and regulatory approvals. A decision had been expected by the end of March. L&B shares fell 1p to 56p.

Haslehurst at Reliance

GEOFF HASLEHURST, the finance director of Laura Ashley who left abruptly following the arrival of Ann Iverson as chief executive last summer, has resurfaced as finance director of Reliance Security. Mr Haslehurst, who started his new job yesterday, replaced John Toop, who left Reliance earlier this year. Brian Kingham, chairman of Reliance, said he was pleased to have someone of Mr Haslehurst's ability joining the board. Mr Haslehurst has previously worked with Thorn UK Rental and Next.

Japan stance welcomed

IAN LANG, President of the Board of Trade, said he welcomes the expiry of the Japan/US semiconductor agreement at the end of July and hopes it is not renewed, a situation he said would bring greater benefit to British companies. Mr Lang, who is in Tokyo accompanying British businesses on a trade mission, was meeting with his Japanese counterpart, Shunpei Tsukahara. Japan opposes an extension of the five-year bilateral accord which provides for a minimum foreign share of 20 per cent of the local market.

Satellite link for Wales

CARDIFF BAY has been chosen as the site for a £50 million satellite earth station, which should attract new multimedia companies to Wales and could create up to 3,500 jobs over the next five years. The station announced yesterday, which will link companies in Wales with the Orion F1 satellite, is being developed by an international consortium of companies, including the Orion network of the US, Cable-Tel, Christiani and Nielsen, TCI and Hyder. They plan to establish a 30-acre multimedia business park alongside the station.

Wall Street seeks to ease restrictions

FROM A CORRESPONDENT IN NEW YORK

THE New York Stock Exchange wants to ease restrictions on broad price swings for the first time since the curbs were imposed after the October 1987 stock market crash.

The so-called "circuit breakers" were designed by the NYSE and federal Securities and Exchange Commission to slow the market's plunge in the event of another sharp sell-off. But concern that the rules are out of date has grown amid a more than doubling in the value of the Dow Jones industrial average since 1988, when the rules took effect.

In London the Stock Exchange has resisted calls for the introduction of similar restrictions when trading is volatile. But a number of European bourses favour constraints to restore calm. In New York a 50-point change

— now amounting to less than 1 per cent and triggered by Monday morning's drop — is now fairly routine, but still triggers curbs on computer-generated trading.

But the proposed changes would only affect a 250-point Dow shift or a 400-point move. The stock exchange narrowly averted closing early last month when the Dow approached the 250-point threshold in its final hour.

The changes would halve the delays in trading triggered by big movements in the Dow, a key indicator of market activity.

Under the proposals, a 250-point change in the Dow from the previous day's close would spur a halt in trading for 30 minutes. The trading delay for a 400-point Dow change would be cut to one hour from two.

There would be no changes to limits in computer-generated trading that kick in after the Dow industrials move 50 points in either direction from the previous day's close.

The NYSE board approved the proposals last Thursday and plans to submit them for approval to the SEC within the next few days, an NYSE spokesman said.

Market experts have argued that the circuit breakers are increasingly irrelevant. For example, a 250-point plunge would have been a remarkable 12 per cent decline in October 1988 when the rule was first tested on the NYSE.

Today, because the market has more than doubled in value since 1988, the Dow only has to fall about 4.5 per cent before it would trigger such a trading halt.



NYSE dealers may see end to curbs



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□ Disarray among forecasters suits the Chancellor □ Lenders limber up for their next débâcle □ SFO seeks dignity

'Tis folly to be wise

IGNORANCE is bliss for Kenneth Clarke when wise folk are split as deeply as Tim Congdon with Patrick Minford and as widely as virtually all six are on one issue or another. He can blithely ignore them, lay them end to end or ask them to change a lightbulb and stand back for a few laughs.

If the six agreed, by contrast, their message would not be a comfortable one. The Chancellor would be confronted with one of two uncomfortable propositions. Either the received wisdom would be that growth is picking up but will be inflationary next year and needs to be curbed, or that he is negligently incompetent and needs to jolt into life fast to stop the economy sliding into recession.

Even in their foolish disarray, the independent economists do agree on one thing. The Chancellor's stoic refusal to budge on his Budget prediction of 3 per cent growth this year belies the odds. It is an exercise in bombast rather than forecasting. Their own projections range from 1.8 per cent to 2.5 per cent.

This is more than a guessing game. Unemployment, public spending, tax revenue and the Budget deficit are all sensitive to such differences. Hence all six expect the public sector to need to

borrow more for 1995-96, this year and for 1997-98 than the Treasury projected in December.

Near-term, the differences are not critical. For 1997-98, however, the average forecast is £21 billion against the Treasury's £15 billion. Yet the forecasters, averaged out, assume that growth will accelerate to 3.3 per cent in 1997. To protect state finances and, equally, to stop inflationary growth, that suggests Mr Clarke would encounter the look-silly factor if he were cavalier with Budget handouts in his planned run-up to the election.

For the moment, the hard evidence is with Mr Minford, who wants more interest rate cuts and reckons that, under these circumstances, flirting with any form of fixed currency condemns Mr Clarke's stewardship. Unless next month's batch of statistics shows a hitherto unnoticed surge in manufacturing in March, industry is now experiencing what apologists might term a minus recovery. Optimists cite consumer windfalls from electricity and build-

ing society conversions as a ready self-starter but the equally problematical "mad-cow" effect, too late for these forecasts, could offset that.

The markets are, however, with Mr Congdon. So is Eddie George, who will surely stop licking his forecasting wounds and come growing from his lair again if anything too nice happens to growth, jobs or take-home pay. The prospect of 3.3 per cent growth next year would surely give him palpitations.

The likely outcome is that growth will disappoint but Mr Clarke will not dare do much about it.

Competition cuts margin for error

BANKING is one of the few industries where competition tends to push up the price. To have more money to lend, you need to attract more first. But a buyers' market in housing and the battle between banks and mutuals has changed all that.

PENNINGTON



Most banks and building societies now have more money than they reckon they can lend prudently.

The new banking companies such as Abbey National, Halifax and Lloyds' Cheltenham & Gloucester will therefore have to think carefully before they respond to the Nationwide and Yorkshire. These building societies are seeking to reassert the historic role of mutual organisations that had no dividends to pay and could therefore lend more cheaply and pay depositors better than the high street banks. The new banks reckon their more accepted new financial status and deeper pockets will

allow them to borrow more cheaply and buy the systems to operate services more efficiently.

The scene is therefore set for a battle over who has the lowest costs, provided banks and neo-banks care to fight for market share on price. This is far from being a foregone conclusion.

The Centre for the Study of Financial Innovation recently polled banking professionals to ask them what might be the likeliest cause of the next banking crisis. Banks do seem addicted to crises. The favourite candidate for banana skin, based on this bitter experience, was a fear that overcapacity would lead to folly, as internal pressures to lend led bankers to take silly risks once more.

So far, that fear has been confined mainly to big-ticket corporate lending. Having been bitten once on mortgages, most lenders are a sight more shy of risky borrowers and properties than they were a decade ago. Soon, however, they may be faced with a choice between unseen higher risks, visibly

lower margins or loss of trade. Only brave executives will dare to suggest sticking the surplus cash into gilt-edged.

A serious venue for serious fraud

NEWS that major fraud trials are set to return to the Old Bailey smacks of a straw blowing in the right direction. Serious fraud presumably warrants a serious hearing at a serious venue. The Old Bailey most certainly fits the bill (no pun intended), whereas Chichester Rents, situated in Chancery Lane, does not.

To the casual observer, Chichester Rents, host to the George Walker and Maxwell courtroom epics, represents little more than a converted office block (precisely what it is) with an aura to match. The casual observer's perspective may not matter one whit but, should the jury share such views, a degree of gravitas is inevitably lost. At the least, jurors will now have the benefit of being able to watch the

expression of a witness, a feat which the architecture of Chichester Rents never quite lent itself to. The Old Bailey will, so the argument goes, restore dignity and formality to white collar trials. In the event, the Serious Fraud Office's case load is running at a record of more than 70, partly reflecting the lowering of the referral ceiling from £5 million to £1 million. George Staple, Director of the SFO, has fought a strong rearguard action in the wake of the Guinness and Blue Arrow controversies. Critics are bluntly reminded that since the SFO's inception in 1988, some 148 trials have led to the convictions of 210 defendants: a hit rate of 62 per cent. Onwards to Maxwell II, scheduled for October at the earliest.

Confidence trick

PANIC makes bad law for markets as well as parliaments. After the 1987 crash, the New York Stock Exchange put in progressive anti-crash barriers for moves of 50 points, 250 and 400 in the Dow Jones average. Since then, the Dow has more than doubled, making the rules far more cautious than intended. The NYSE chose Easter to suggest they be relaxed. That's great chutzpah or lousy timing.

Rivalry weakens banks and building societies

BY PATRICIA TEHAN, BANKING CORRESPONDENT

THE profitability of UK banks and building societies is under threat as they battle in an increasingly fierce competitive environment. According to research published this week by Standard & Poor's, the credit rating agency, the main risk facing UK financial institutions is competition.

A survey of the UK banking industry shows that increasing levels of competition are forcing down margins and putting earnings under pressure. Ian Linnell, associate director of S&P, said banks are responding by "paying attention to their cost bases and stripping out costs as much as possible." In the past,

he added, "banks were able to rely on inflation to get themselves out of difficulties through the appreciation of security. That is no longer guaranteed."

The report follows a hard-hitting study published last month by the Centre for the Study of Financial Innovation, which also suggested that intense competition in the banking sector would be the cause of the next banking crisis.

In his survey, Mr Linnell said competition in the UK banking sector has intensified over the past 15 years as a result of "deregulation, despecialisation and disinter-

mediation." The low interest rate environment has added to the competitive pressure, he said.

Despite the changes taking place in banks, as they turn themselves into "financial supermarket-type" franchises with significant market share offering a wide range of services to capture as many of a client's transactions as possible, banks are vulnerable to niche players, he said. These are attempting to cherry-pick the most profitable sectors.

Despite his concerns, Mr Linnell said the pressure would not have an impact on credit ratings, since banks were well capitalised and have

already, in some cases, suffered downgrades.

Mr Linnell published a separate study of the UK building society market. He said the member reward schemes being introduced by societies in an effort to demonstrate the advantages of mutual status over conversion to a public company could have a negative impact on earnings. "A price war in the sector which could substantially reduce earnings and capitalisation, particularly if accompanied by a deterioration in asset quality, would inevitably put the system's ratings under pressure," he said.

Harrisons finance director resigns

BY PAUL DURMAN

THE finance director of Harrisons & Crossfield resigned yesterday, just three weeks after the chemicals and building supplies group announced its annual results.

Martin Anderson apparently left because of a personality clash with Bill Turcan, chief executive. His exit unsettled a puzzled City and shares in the group ended the day 9p down at 148p.

Mr Turcan gave little explanation for Mr Anderson's departure, but emphasised: "There is no question of financial impropriety, there are no financial or accounting issues. This is not another Woolwich. We jointly agreed that we would part

company. There was no single issue."

Mr Turcan said the group's report will show that Mr Anderson, who was on a two-year contract, was paid £191,000 last year. Although compensation has yet to be agreed, this suggests Mr Anderson could receive up to £380,000.

Mr Anderson joined Harrisons & Crossfield two years ago. He was previously a corporate financier with Hill Samuel, the merchant bank.

Mr Turcan said Harrisons & Crossfield had some strong internal candidates for the post of finance director. The company has also appointed headhunters.

Microsoft enters 'intranet' alliance

FROM RICHARD THOMSON IN NEW YORK

MICROSOFT has formed an alliance with MCI, the telecommunications company, and Digital Equipment, the computer maker, to provide a new kind of computer system for companies.

The move is part of Microsoft's aggressive drive to win back a dominant position in the Internet, which smaller rivals are threatening to steal from it.

The new grouping will provide companies with "intranet" systems — a kind of internal Web network not open to the public. Intranet systems, which use much the same software as the public Internet system, are useful for electronic mail, messaging and internal company communications.

Microsoft, Digital and MCI,

which is 20 per cent owned by British Telecom, said that the intranet business was worth about \$400 million in the US, and estimated that it would grow to \$8 billion by 1998.

Microsoft will supply the software, while Digital will provide the necessary hardware to set up intranet systems. MCI will contribute the communications expertise that is necessary to link up the system.

Microsoft has not established the dominant position on the Internet that it enjoys in the personal computer software market. Over the past two months, however, it has sought to outmanoeuvre smaller rivals, such as Netscape, that provide Internet software.

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INSURANCE & INVESTMENT

THE TIMES WEDNESDAY APRIL 10 1996

THE TIMES
CITY DIARYNasdaq slows
Demon Dan

NASDAQ, the New York over-the-counter share market, is instituting a new rule that allows it to suspend the shares of any stock tipped by Dan Dorfman, the demon tipster of the CNBC TV channel.

The controversial Mr Dorfman, America's best-known stock market journalist, has such a spectacular effect on share prices whenever he mentions a company, that Nasdaq wants to limit wild price fluctuations. The suspensions promise to become a daily event, since Mr Dorfman makes several of his frenetic TV presentations each day, often tipping a selection of stocks.

Sidelined

RED FACES all round at Railtrack as it realises that the UK's leading rail city is without a sharehold for the forthcoming decentralisation. York, a major rail centre during the nineteenth century which built rail coaches until only a few months ago and is the headquarters of East Coast Mainline, has been left off the map. Thousands of rail pensioners and current rail staff in York will have to travel to shareshops in Harrogate, Northallerton or Scarborough, to register their interest.



Lap of luxury

BROWN'S HOTEL, the setting for Alexander Graham Bell's first successful telephone call in Britain, has secured another first. It is the only hotel in the world to offer Reuters Business Briefing information service — at a price. Captains of industry, who pay as much as £600 per night to stay at the exclusive Mayfair hotel, are handing over an extra £55 per day to hire a lap-top computer to access the service.

Celebrity cakes

MEG RYAN and Bruce Springsteen were among the first passengers to sample a £100,000 deal struck between British Airways and Jane Asher, the celebrity cake maker. Asher will bake cakes for BA international flights to mark special occasions, including Halloween, and Christmas. Asher, whose contract includes a number of free first-class flights, made the most of her new deal last week on a trip to South Africa to film a biscuit commercial. She handed out the inaugural batch of cakes in the shape of spring flowerpots.

Norman castle

TOP golfers have agreed to compete in a head-to-head match at entrepreneur Peter de Savary's 7,500-acre playground for millionaires, the Carnegie Club in Scotland. Greg Norman, the world's number one golfer, and US Open champion Corey Pavin, have agreed to tee off this July against the back of Skibo Castle for a match to be broadcast on American TV. Norman, dubbed The Great White Shark, has been a member of the £2,000-a-year club since it opened last year, and Greg Norman's Australian Meat Pie is a regular feature on the clubhouse menu.

MORAG PRESTON



The urban wasteland of Detroit, a city abandoned by a million people in 30 years but now aiming to revitalise its core with public and private funding

Motown begins drive back
from its decades of decayIan Brodie on a comeback by Detroit
as people power foils the street gangs

Visitors to Detroit are appalled by the sight of thousands of abandoned buildings. One even has its own historic marker. It commemorates the spot where Henry Ford set up the first assembly line for mass production, in 1913, and where, eventually, 9,000 Model T Fords could be turned out in a single day.

The marker notes, with unintended irony, that mass production set the pattern of abundance for life in the 20th century. It is all too obvious that good fortune has long since passed the old factory by. The roof and windows are broken. Its forecourt is cracked and strewn with litter. Across the street, the art deco shell of a Sears department store has been boarded up for years.

Similar clumps of forsaken buildings scar the eight-mile Woodward Avenue corridor that runs from the city limits into the heart of Detroit, where ageing skyscrapers stand empty. Numerous endeavours fell victim to the scourge, including churches, banks, undertakers, motels, garages, cafes and bowling alleys. The side streets are pockmarked with derelict houses. Many were once graceful dwellings. Now their verandahs sag and the gardens are choked with weeds and junk.

In little over 30 years, Detroit lost 200,000 jobs and nearly one million residents. One-third of its businesses and half of its population fled. What had begun as a drift to the encircling suburbs became a stampede of white and black flight after the race riots of 1967, in which 43 people were killed and more than 400 buildings were burned. Those left behind were mostly the poor and elderly. Detroit's total of empty premises reached 15,000. No other American city suffered the distress of so great an exodus.

Now, after several false starts, Motown is rolling up its sleeves, determined to reverse the decades of decay.

Leading the charge is Detroit's mayor, Dennis Archer, an astute and energetic politician. Like nearly 80 per cent of Detroit, Mr Archer is black, a

crucial ingredient for his credibility and effectiveness. He admits that when he took office three years ago, he inherited a dysfunctional city. Red tape was rife. City Hall's bills went unpaid for months. Phones rang unanswered. Computers sat idle. Municipal workers were demoralised.

Conservatives demanded widespread privatisation of city departments, but Mr Archer believed that government should "not arbitrarily decide to do less. Instead, he formed 'turnaround teams' to examine every crevice of the city's operations and to discover how they could perform better, but more thriftily. The teams were drawn from city employees, trades unions and the corporate community. Ways were found to streamline services and to instil leadership.

The coalition forged between private and public interests was then expanded for a new task. More than a thousand participants joined forces to craft a plan for Detroit's future that would win over Mr Archer's friend and fellow Democrat in the White House, Bill Clinton. It worked.

Detroit an "empowerment zone" with a gift of \$100 million to ease the urban blight and tax breaks for any business — American or foreign — willing to set up shop in the zone. In a remarkable rallying of support, an additional \$2 billion has been pledged in private-development commitments by banks, corporations and foundations.

One British company is preparing to open a branch in the zone, if its bid to sell vehicle parts to Ford is successful. Mr Archer paints a rosy picture, but newcomers should brace themselves for a resurgence of trade union solidarity, as seen in the United Auto Workers' showdown with General Motors and the long strike against Detroit's two main newspapers.

A second public-private alliance has

just made a start on buying up 80 or so of the lifeless buildings that give Detroit's city centre the feel of a modern Acropolis. Their targets include Hudson's, a 25-storey hulk that was once the Selfridges of the Midwest, and the shuttered Stater Hotel, formerly a byword for elegance.

The plan to revitalise the city's core will mean either demolishing or refurbishing the dead buildings to make way for boutiques, offices, places of entertainment and lots for rent to young professionals. It will take a lot of goodwill, but Detroit's Big Three — Ford, Chrysler and General Motors — are among the corporate sponsors solidly behind the project.

The would-be saviours of Detroit have scant patience for a provocative proposal by a cityscape photographer, Camilo Jose Vergara, that several blocks of the pre-Depression skyscrapers should be left standing as a national historic park of urban ruins. In his recent book, *The New American Ghetto*, Mr Vergara argued that the park would serve both as a monument to the fear of racism and as a warning to future planners of how quickly a city can plunge from prosperity to despair.

For all Mr Archer's efforts, Detroit still has a severe image problem. Crime is declining, but a series of bizarre episodes has accentuated the notion of a city on the edge.

The figure-skating champion Nancy Kerrigan suffered the crippling attack on her knee in Detroit. In another case, a terrified woman escaped attackers by jumping to her death from a bridge as callous, jeering onlookers urged her on. First reports overlooked the fact that two men risked their lives trying to save the woman from drowning while others in the crowd frantically called police on cellular phones. Recently, a mother reportedly sold her 15-year-old son for

\$1,000 to pay a crack cocaine debt. Further investigation showed that he had volunteered to work for the drug dealers.

Detroit's flourishing underworld had long proved impenetrable to outside scrutiny. Now an intense FBI effort has led to 17 arrests. Among those detained is the reputed crime boss, Jack Tocco, described as one of America's most powerful Mafia figures. The accused have been linked to a 30-year trail of extortion, racketeering, illegal gambling and violence.

Nothing brought greater infamy to Detroit than the annual convulsion before Halloween known as Devil's Night. Dozens of gangs roamed the streets setting fire to abandoned structures and sometimes to those still occupied. Last year, the madness ended. In a remarkable marshalling of local pride, Mr Archer recruited 30,000 volunteers to patrol the streets and to report suspicious activity. As a result, the gangs stayed at home and there were fewer fires than on a normal night.

Mr Archer has just received further confirmation that his reforms have the support of working folk as well as the Chamber of Commerce. Voters gave him an overwhelming mandate to build a new stadium for the city's major-league baseball club, the Detroit Tigers. He argued persuasively that the project was pivotal to reviving the downtown wasteland and would attract new pubs, restaurants and hotels for thousands of fans.

Sceptics were less sure, but Mr Archer's enthusiasm is infectious. He claims that Detroit's loss of population has bottomed out at a shade over one million and that the next census will show an increase. New houses are going up, a novelty for Detroit. Unemployment has dropped more than five percentage points, to 8.2 per cent — a rate comparable to that in Britain.

Mr Archer claims, justifiably, that business confidence is returning. As he puts it: "Detroit is more than on its way back, we're on our way to becoming the new city of tomorrow." Maybe, but tomorrow will take a while to come.



ANTHONY HARRIS

Wall Street is
getting used
to good news

Given that the employment figures the previous Friday were a genuine surprise, this week's display of steady nerves in the US markets was impressive.

There was advance warning calculated (deliberately?) to shake out nervous sellers, but the final fall in the Dow on Monday was only 1.5 per cent. Long-term interest rates have risen by less than 20 basis points. The story is solid evidence for this column's firm belief that derivatives and programme trading, which bring risk out into the open and price it, make markets less, not more, volatile.

But the real question is not about the market, but about the US economy. Why was the good news about jobs so surprising? And will New York keep its nerve if the good news goes on, as it seems likely to do for some time?

The central difficulty about reading the trends in the US is to sort out the effects of the normal determinants of growth — incomes, money and wealth — which are all solidly bullish, from those of enormous and very rapid structural changes, which produce a recession-like picture.

Consumer real incomes have been rising at an annual rate of 3.5 per cent over the last six months. Sales of houses and cars are buoyant — or in the case of cars and other durables, growing explosively (a 6.6 per cent annual rate over the last half-year). The broad money supply, M2, was rising so fast up to March that the only reaction was to try to explain it away (though it then fell), and Wall Street is up some 30 per cent.

The rational response to indicators like these would be to fear early overheating. The picture is disturbingly like that of 1994, when robust growth pushed bond yields to more than 8 per cent for a time, and bond market vigilantes drew an even more sinister parallel with the credit boom of 1986, which did trigger inflation, not to mention a 30 per cent stock market "correction".

The other side of the

picture is the steady transformation of the US into a part-time service economy. Output is gently rising, despite some reported inventory problems, but employment in manufacturing has gone on falling by an average of 27,000 a month for the last year (and no less than 62,000 in the "strong" March report).

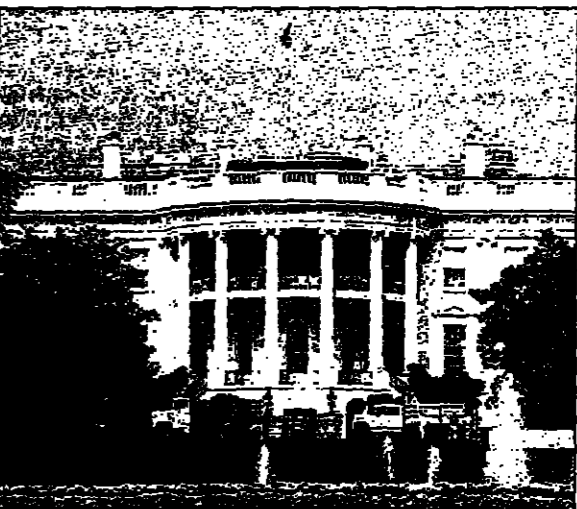
This reflects the export of jobs to low-wage Mexico, within NAFTA, and other Latin American countries. It also explains why Patrick Buchanan has been able to frighten the Republican establishment with a largely protectionist campaign in the primaries.

More important for the markets, the structural change helps to account for the job insecurity which has so far kept wage growth subdued, in spite of the strike at General Motors.

Meanwhile, the service sector itself — the growth sector of the economy — is, as here, becoming increasingly part-time. The household jobs survey does not attract the big headlines which greet the employment report, but the fact that 38 per cent of the new March jobs are shown as part-time (up from 14 per cent a year earlier) deserves more attention. It means that this sector, which is largely non-unionised, is becoming more flexible.

There are other promising signs that non-inflationary growth may still have some way to run. The huge surge in investment spending, which began to tail off a year ago, seems to have been decidedly premature: the Fed's measure of capacity utilisation is still well below 83 per cent, far below the danger level. This also suggests that as output responds to higher demand, there should be a renewed surge in productivity, offsetting worries about unit labour costs.

Any boom is likely to be restrained. Credit card delinquencies have been rising and lenders are belatedly remembering prudence. So while more good news does seem likely, not so good as to be really frightening.



The improving economy will lift spirits at the White House

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Loyal Lloyd's names the losers

From A.J. Welford
Sir, The "affordable Lloyd's" settlement offer means exactly the opposite to many loyal names who have begged and borrowed to pay their losses and trade through, to support Lloyd's, and is manifestly unfair. They face a so-called cap of up to £100,000, but this is on top of losing all their funds at Lloyd's. These include their triple profits release, which they needed to pay creditors, litigation settlement offers and guarantees at Lloyd's.

Many names, encouraged by the very top of the Lloyd's establishment not to be "wimps" and to pay their losses, have very large Lloyd's loss accounts with their banks. These, more often than not, are secured on their homes, as

are their guarantees. This means, to many, that the actual finality cost is more than £500,000 on top of the funds they have already poured into Lloyd's. These are the loyal names exhorted to trade on to support Lloyd's, incurring high annual costs in the process which have not been taken into account.

Contrast their situation with the names who stopped supporting Lloyd's, for whatever reason, and did not pay their losses and ran down their funds at Lloyd's.

Their losses are being written off and the maximum they will have to find, if it can be found, is £100,000, and, often, much less. What a shabby

treatment from such a venerable institution and what a reflection on self-regulation. What a travesty of justice if this settlement is voted through by the majority, who did not support Lloyd's and cut their losses.

Lloyd's must recognise its debt to the loyal names in the same spirit as it has always honoured the claims from its policyholders. Surely Lloyd's did not intend the R&R to administer the "coup de grace" to those who have supported it the most.

We all want Lloyd's to continue and prosper, but not at the price of personal ruin. Lloyd's must ensure that it gives, at the least, the same

treatment to its loyal names as it is currently offering to those who did not support it.

This means recognising that names' debts, incurred in supporting Lloyd's, and the payment of their losses must be taken into account when the final sums are done. They must also have a profits release to appease their debtors and must be enabled to trade on by leaving their guarantees intact.

This will help to restore Lloyd's reputation and will avoid the growing impression that the settlement offer has been made on the basis that "the ends justify the means", however unjust.

Yours faithfully,
A.J. WELFORD,
Gothic Farm,
Heveningham, Suffolk.

When neighbour was putting off the Ritz

From David Leibling
Sir, The Barclay brothers, owners of the Ritz Hotel, have offered to buy William Kent House, which stands off Piccadilly, behind the Ritz, (report, March 27).

This is not the first time the Ritz has tried to buy this property. On the previous occa-

sion, the owners are reputed to have said: "William Kent House is not for sale. However, we would like to buy the Ritz as we have always fancied a view over Piccadilly." Yours faithfully,
DAVID LEIBLING,
64 Kewferry Road,
Northwood, Middlesex.

Excluded from the terms of Railtrack deal

From Mr Roy Albinson
Sir, Pennington suggests (March 27) that Labour policy might or might not be to "pursue our goal of stealing the track back from the people who own it".

The present shareholders might well think that the sale itself is a steal and support this

view, as they are unable to vote on the terms of the sale already approved in advance at any price by proxy of a minority of shareholders.

Yours etc,
ROY ALBINSON,
Courtlands,
Mayfield Lane,
Wadhurst, E. Sussex.

HIGHLIGHTS
FROM THE 1995 REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

- Sales of £876m show 14% increase despite difficult economic conditions and unprecedentedly high levels of raw material increases.
- Profit of £48.4m on continuing operations only marginally below the 1994 result.
- Restructuring programme, including selective divestments, on schedule.
- Product innovation plus developments in USA and Eastern Europe, augurs well for an improving situation.

AGM to be held 2.30pm on Wednesday 17 April 1996 at

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Euromcamp, the specialist travel company, will buy the Tesh Travels companies in Germany, Switzerland and Austria for up to £9.66 million. The companies currently act as sole agents for Euromcamp. The UK company said the acquisitions would enhance earnings in the current year, helped by profits from the incremental sale of insurance and transport associated with Euromcamp holidays. The main investors and joint managing directors of Tesh are to retire.



"We have very little time left. But it is obvious that improvements are needed more from the rest of the world — particularly Asia — than from either the United States or the European Union," the source added.

FROM RACHEL BRIDGE IN SYDNEY

British Aerospace is also tendering for a Federal government contract to supply up to 40 training fighter aircraft to the Royal Australian Air Force in a deal which analysts estimate to be worth up to A\$1

BY ALASDAIR MURRAY

ance underwriter, to offer a 20 per cent discount on insurance premiums. Cloud Base predicts that profits for 1997-98 could top the initial market capitalisation.



zertland. They gave details of how funds were milked from Banesto and implicated Señor Conde's defence lawyer, Mariano Gómez de Liaño, who had to step down and may face charges himself.

When the central bank intervened on the Spanish

BY PAUL DURMAN



Cassidy: TVC good results



FROM RICHARD THOMSON IN NEW YORK

has already presented other ideas for private sector involvement in local government funding, including the Infrastructure Levy, which it

0171-782 7344

PUBLIC NOTICES

Admission tickets for any member or their proxy can be obtained from the Chief Executive at the above address.

By the order
of the Committee of Management
J. A. Gower, Chief Executive.
Dated 9th April 1996

Note
Any creditor who has not received notice of the meeting and who wishes to attend or be represented at it should inform David Burrows of Price Waterhouse on 01222 576255 to obtain the necessary forms.

LEGAL NOTICES

inspection at the office of
Mr & Young between the hours
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order.
dated 26th day of March 1996.
By order of the Board
Gillespie, Director.

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lion pesos, about \$3 billion.
The investigating judge, who
was named by state law-
yers, says that the state
bank's million pesos are
possibly "removed from the
bank's accounts."

The largest amount, 75
million pesos, was found
in the accounts of a com-
pany, German-Vahia S.A.,
which was led by Sergio Cer-
da, the judge says. The
company's records of 1993
showed and others said
that money came from Bag-
dad, mainly through and Reg-
istered cases, such
as the case from Ger-
many. The money was
sent to the state and to
other banks and pri-
vate banks. They are also
said to be "recor-

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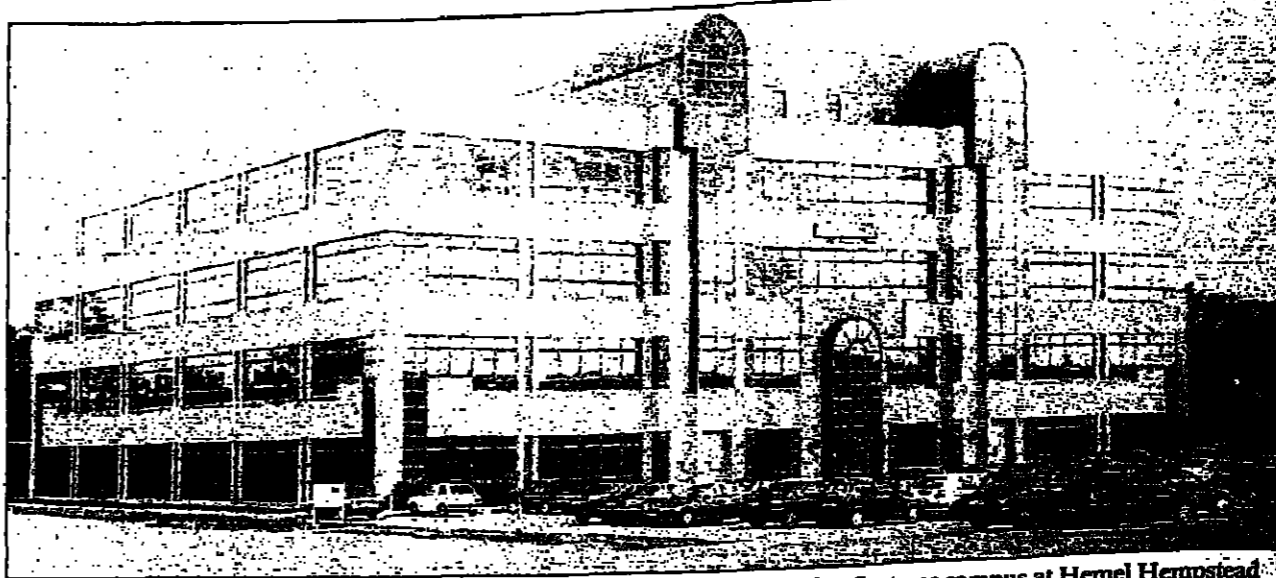
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As confidence returns, David Crawford sees a rise in office relocation



The 3Com Corporation's £10.3 million building on the McDonnell Information Systems campus at Hemel Hempstead

Business is on the move again. More companies than at any time since the early 1990s plan to take new space during the next two years — to the tune of 4.5 million sq ft in the South East alone. Decentralisation of jobs from central London is also about to rise from a 1995 low of 2,800 to 8,500, significantly more than the 20-year-plus annual average of 6,400.

But the benefits will not be spread as widely as in the past. Most private-sector moves from London, for example, will be short-haul — a point underlined by new research from the Commission for the New Towns and the CBI Employee Research Council, showing that organisations now prefer to stay close to their own locations — although the public sector tends to concentrate on the North West, Yorkshire and the South West.

Most future moves will be accompanied by substantial reductions of existing floor-space, largely low specification, rather than representing net additions. Net South East regional vacancies over the period 1996-98 are expected to total six million sq ft.

The Ministry of Defence relocation to Bristol, for example, could release two million sq ft of office space — 10 per cent of Whitehall's entire central London portfolio. The Government will, of course, continue to require a presence within range of Parliament, but, says Peter Evans of DTZ Research, "never again to the extent that it has in the past".

Significant take-up of sec-

ond-hand office space coming on to the market will be restricted to highly active areas such as the City of London. This arises from the shortage of new prime space in the financial core. A wave of expansions and new inward investments by companies such as ABN Amro, Chase Chemical, and Deutsche Bank Morgan Grenfell has boosted the City's confidence ahead of would-be competitors such as Paris and Frankfurt.

At the same time, loosening of traditional City ties are evident in the large Docklands commitments made by Barclays de Zoete Wedd and Morgan Stanley, and by Banque Paribas's purchase of a site for a new 350,000 sq ft headquarters in Marylebone.

Nearly two thirds of predicted relocation activity, in fact, reflects fundamental changes in the business environment rather than concern solely over operating costs, as in the past. "Mergers, acquisitions and ongoing cost pressures are fuelling continued rationalisation and consolidation, with more energetic management of companies' operation-

Is Britain
back in
business?

al portfolios," says Chris Jolliffe, research partner at Jones Lang Wootton, whose recently published *Property Confidence Review* reflects the opinions of 554 UK-based companies.

His views are echoed in the *Milliken Report on Space Futures*, published last month by the Henley Centre on behalf of the US-owned Milliken Carpet. More than a quarter of facilities managers in organisations with more than 2,000 staff expected their space requirements to fall over the next five years because of new technology and changing business needs.

This new trend affects a whole range of traditionally major consumers of office floorspace, including financial services, conglomerates, chemicals and electronics.

Rationalisation of office occupancy by a relatively small number of electronics companies has already led to the shedding of 1.6 million sq ft over the past six months, more than half of total negative net demand. Continuing reorganisation within this sector, notably as a result of BT's sus-

tained downsizing, will also account for half the 10.5 million sq ft of space that respondents to the *Property Confidence Review* expect to vacate in the next two years.

Under BT's long-running relocation programme, for example, 1,400 jobs are due to move, mainly from the West End of London, to Stockley Park near Heathrow. BT's mooted merger with Cable & Wireless may well bring more rationalisation.

But contrasting evidence of real expansion in this sector comes from the "planning for growth" programme being progressed by the £1.3 billion turnover 3Com Corporation, which is implementing its largest-ever infrastructural investment in Europe.

Spread over four sites in Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire, and the Marlow and Bourne End area of Buckinghamshire, 3Com is now consolidating on one site in Hemel Hempstead, with the £10.3 million purchase of an 85,000 sq ft building on the McDonnell Information Systems campus.

The company is also increasing its leased space at Bourne End before relocating that part of the business next year in the M4/M40 corridors.

To keep 3Com's options open, the consultants Jones Lang Wootton advised taking initial short-term leases. Chris Kane, a JLV partner, says: "This has enabled 3Com to cater for expansion without the worry of disposing of long-term commitments."

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...and Christopher Warman tells the good news of a £25m business park

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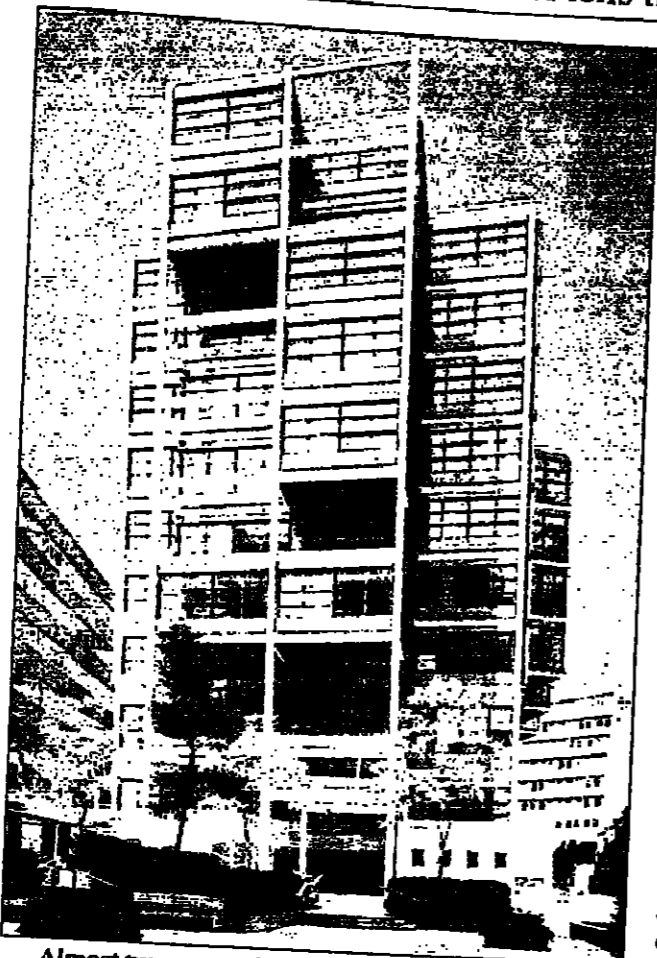
The move of an American company, Simula Automotive Safety Products, to the Wansbeck Business Park in Ashington, Northumberland, is a location rather than a relocation, but it demonstrates the competition among British regions to attract companies. Simula, one of the top 40 fastest-growing American companies last year, is taking over a 30,000 sq ft unit in a £4 million investment that will create 180 new jobs in manufacturing a new type of airbag to be fitted first into BMWs. Wansbeck, a £25 million park, has been developed by Wansbeck District Council in partnership with Northumberland County Council, English Coal Enterprises and British Coal Enterprises. Simula chose Wansbeck after a European-wide search for its first plant outside the United States. Wansbeck sees the move not only as important in itself but crucial as a catalyst to bring more investment to the area. Denis Murphy, the leader of Wansbeck council, says: "It is extremely significant that a company such as Simula has recognised the investment potential in Wansbeck. A great deal of groundwork has gone into paving the way for a new economic era here. We have put in the right infrastructure; attractive financial packages are on the table, and we can offer a lifestyle which is unmatched by many other parts of the UK or Europe."

Simula was persuaded by the high quality of the English Partnerships scheme, the ease of access from Wansbeck to the Continent, a dedicated workforce which has adapted to learn new skills and a global telecommunications network into which the business centre is linked. The telecommunications network offers video-conferencing facilities, access to the Internet and state-of-the-art telematics — available on a hire basis.

Another factor is the North East's growing reputation as a leading manufacturing centre in the automotive industry. Simula's first products from the Ashington factory will be going into the 1997 range of BMWs, but the company says it is also hoping to supply to Nissan.

Wansbeck has attracted many overseas companies. Synpac, the pharmaceutical company, part of the Taiwanese Koo Group, recently announced a £7 million investment in new plant and technology at its Wansbeck factory to help to maintain its position as a leading worldwide manufacturer of Penicillin G. Lite-On, a Taiwanese company making electronic equipment, has also taken over an existing business in Wansbeck.

Other companies, such as Alcan, which has a local smelter and power station, and Welwyn Components, an electronics group, are — like Synpac, members of the Wansbeck Initiative, a partnership between the private and public sectors working to build a sound economic base.



Almost two years after moving into Fleet Place in London EC4, the law firm Wilde Sapte has won the 'existing buildings' category in the annual Office of the Year awards, organised by the British Institute of Facilities Management in association with The Times

Victoria's little Eden

EDEN HOUSE, pictured, in Carlisle Place, London SW1, has come to market at a quoting rent of just over £30 a sq ft for the 38,935 sq ft building. The refurbishment of the former Borax House, overlooking the Westminster Cathedral piazza, was by Crest Nicholson Properties, which bought the building in 1994. The joint agents for the seven-storey building are Richard Ellis and Sparkes Porter.

SKANDIA Property (UK) Ltd, with Scottish Life Assurance Company, has secured the largest open letting in Cardiff for many years. Knox Court, its 59,900 sq ft development in the

MARKET MOVES



Fitzalan Place office area, has been fully let to the Legal & General Insurance Society.

The consultant Chesterton says the letting is believed to be on a fixed 15-year term with five-yearly, upward-only, rent reviews.

and the quoting rent is £16.50 a sq ft. Completed in February, Knox Court has full air-conditioning and raised floors. Its situation, near Cardiff shopping centre and in the heart of the commercial district, qualifies it for regional selective assistance grants.

Robin Willis of Skandia says: "There is a high demand for city centre offices within regional centres as decentralisation increases."

NATWEST Group Property has begun demolition work on its development at 1 St James's Square, London SW1 — the start of what some see as one of the most important office developments in the West End for more than a decade. On the site NatWest will build a seven-storey 100,000 sq ft office, designed by Sheppard Robson.

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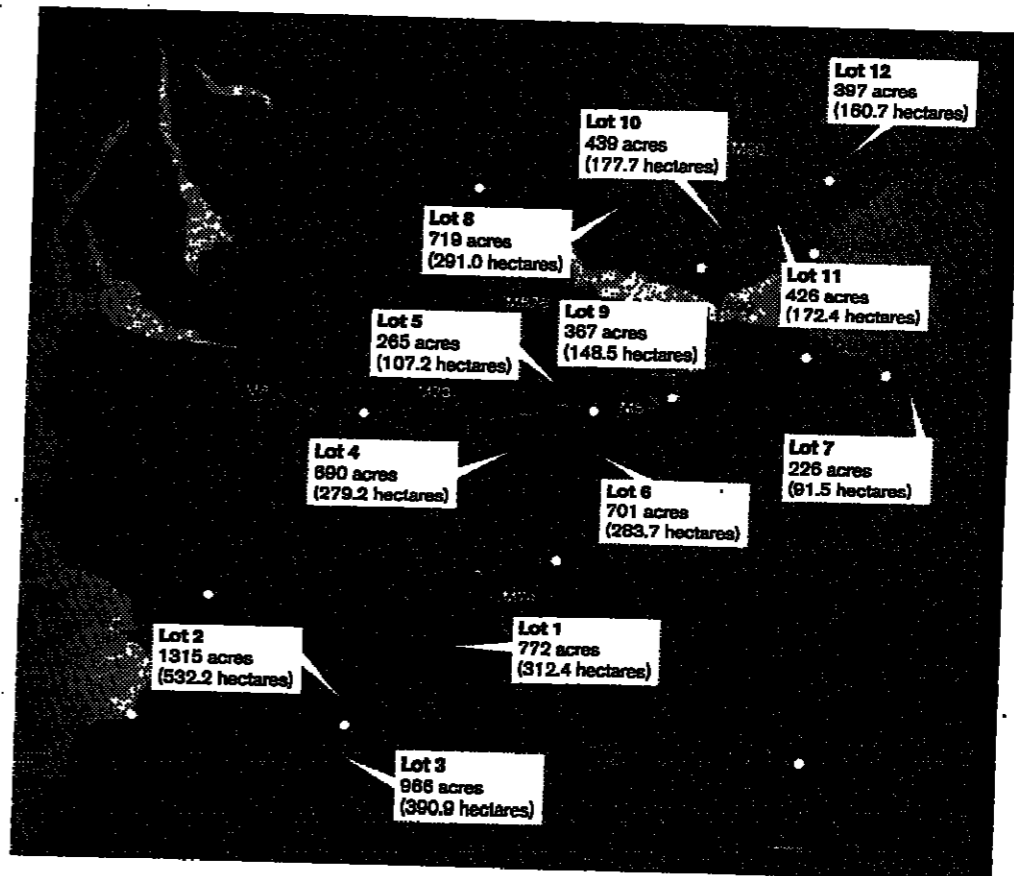
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■ MUSIC 1

Harrison Birtwistle writes music that's loud, shocking and rude. But the world is wrong to censure him for it



■ MUSIC 2

Harry Christophers and The Sixteen pull in the crowds — and give it their all — in Mozart's Requiem in London

THE TIMES
ARTS

■ MUSIC 3

Under Claudio Abbado's direction, the Salzburg Easter Festival is now a model of serious artistic intentions



■ MUSIC 4

The Norwegian Opera has a fine new Ring cycle in its repertory, and it's headed for Britain

On the eve of a major celebration of Harrison Birtwistle, Paul Griffiths defends a great controversialist

Roots in the past, a mind on today

Since last year's Last Night of the Proms, when his *Panic* lashed out for the first time, all the world surely knows that Harrison Birtwistle is the composer of music that is loud, shocking and rude. And all the world is right — but it is wrong to censure him for it.

Loudness can be exhilarating or challenging, shocks can open doors in the mind that one did not realise were standing there waiting to be unlocked, and rudeness, honest rudeness, may at least be telling us the truth. We hear an unaccustomed noise, and instinctively we run for cover. But we might gain more if we would stay out there a while, and listen, and grow to learn, even grow to love.

We have the chance. On Friday night the South Bank Centre will be giving British concertgoers a long-awaited opportunity to hear and see again Birtwistle's biggest work so far, *The Mask of Orpheus*, for the first time since it was staged by English National Opera in 1986.

On that occasion I wrote in *The Times* that the world was changed, and so it was. I cannot imagine the last decade without the opportunity, every now and then, to remember that evening in the Coliseum, and to try to take on board all it was saying about the slipperiness of stories, about — despite that slipperiness, and maybe even thanks to it — the hold over us possessed by myths, about the power of music to summon gods, about the multiple time-tracks on which we all pursue our lives.

This time around, *Orpheus* is only a beginning. Across the next three weeks will come a series of concerts, *Secret Theatres*, to bring us some of the works that led up to the opera, and some of those that have followed it, including the extravagantly inventive piano concerto *Antiphonies*, as well as a brand new piece for Birtwistle's longstanding champions the London Sinfonietta, and a whole programme of songs to words by

Paul Celan punctuated by brief movements for string quartet. One of the marks of Birtwistle's mastery — a mastery which *Secret Theatres* celebrates — is that any attempt to define his music is bound to fail. I mentioned at the start its loudness, and indeed it does enjoy what recourse it can get to the tonage of a big brass section in full voice, or the energetic noise of xylophones or drums, or the shriek of high woodwind. But then a lot of Birtwistle is quiet, and certainly his most haunting music

It is a mark of Birtwistle's mastery that any attempt to define his music is bound to fail

comes in long melodic lines that will often be found stepping in the background of his musical landscape, gently and almost secretly, humming to themselves.

So this is music that can be stealthy as well as shocking — and even the shock may be that of finding something one knew already, but did not have the music for: the pitiless violence of nature (most definitely including the violence inherent in the nature of the human animal), the touching efforts people make to dress themselves against that violence, the depth of time, the sanctity of occasion. And if the effect can be rude, uncompromising, then Birtwistle has also written some of the most seductive love music of the late 20th century, and some of the most disconsolate laments.

Another contradiction is that Birtwistle should be seen as repre-

senting the far left of music when he stands so solidly with its great traditions. The disciplined savagery of his work is an inheritance from Varèse; the ceremonial forms provide a link with Messiaen; and he learnt from Stravinsky that a bunch of instrumentalists, whether a small group or a full orchestra, could become the dramatic personae in abstract plays of solo stance, group identity and crowd dissent, so that every piece of music is also a piece of theatre.

But Birtwistle's traditionalism has roots further back. I remember him saying — not with foolish pride, but with seriousness and dedication — that when he wrote for the orchestra he took his standard from Beethoven. This does not mean, of course, that his music apes Beethoven's style, or that it should do so. What was most traditional about Beethoven was his determination to create something different, of his own, out of himself. So it is with Birtwistle. And Birtwistle also seems to share something that is even rarer today, which is a belief in the Beethovenian paradox that music must be fiercely individual if it is to reach everyone, and that it must reflect today if it is to be of interest tomorrow.

Over the past 40 years, Birtwistle has reflected — and reflected on — many different worlds: the studiosity of the Fifties, the extroversion and scepticism of the Sixties, the retrenchment of the Seventies, the materialism of the Eighties, and now the wild mix of retrogression and hope that marks the ending of the millennium. And all the time he has stayed true to himself, and true to a certainty that music could be new and as the same time immemorably old — as old as regret, elation, cruelty and prayer.

Secret Theatres: The Harrison Birtwistle retrospective starts on Friday at the Festival Hall (0171-960 4242) with *The Mask of Orpheus*, and continues until May 4



CONCERT

Fast, furious and forte

EVER since the film *Amadeus*, Mozart's Requiem has pulled in the crowds, and Sunday night's performance at the Barbican by The Sixteen and the City of London Sinfonia under Harry Christophers was no exception: the hall was filled to capacity. It was an all-Mozart evening, with another favourite, the *Exultate, Jubilate*, and the *Vesperae Solennes de Confessore* (including the much-loved *Laudate Dominum*) in the first half of the programme.

It was a big occasion, then, for the soprano soloist, who also has some of the best moments in the Requiem. Lynda Russell would not have been my first choice for Mozart: she negotiated *Exultate, Jubilate* with moderate success, but her voice lacks the

The Sixteen/Christophers Barbican

range, especially in the lower register, and, it must be said, the quality to be able to bring off a truly special performance. Towards the end of the evening especially, she tended to sing everything forte — but in this she was not alone.

The other soloists, Catherine Wyn-Rogers (now there's a voice with quality), Mark Padmore and Michael George, were of a different calibre, so it was a shame they had so much less to do.

The real stars were, of course, The Sixteen, here expanded to some 26 singers and including the best freelance professionals that London has to offer. Clarity and precision are the hallmarks of The Sixteen: no less in Mozart than in Renaissance polyphony; it is just still more of a treat in Mozart. They gave it their all, whether in the whirlwind psalm settings of the Vespers (plenty here to prestage the Requiem) or that melting moment in the "Confutatis" where the sopranos enter on "Voca me". Even that could have been quieter, but by then the City of London Sinfonia and Harry Christophers had the bit between the teeth and were careering towards the finishing post.

Christophers's approach was generally fast and furious, and this generated much excitement, especially in movements which lend themselves perfectly to the hell-for-leather treatment such as the "Rex tremendae". Others, such as the Offertorium, seemed too precipitate, with Mozart's string writing trampled in the headlong rush.

The City of London Sinfonia, with concessions to historical awareness (though not as many as advertised) played like the excellent modern orchestra they are, with Christophers apparently making little stylistic impression. That is, if he wanted to, for in those passages that demanded a slower pace, the interpretation was decidedly Romantic. In any case, he was unable to bring the same light and shade to the orchestral playing as to the singing of his superb choir.

TESS KNIGHTON



Carol Yahr as Brünnhilde in *Götterdämmerung*: her performance is a tour de force

Fresh Nordic insights

Before 1993, Wagner's *Rheingold*, *Siegfried* and *Götterdämmerung* had never been staged in Norway. Over the past three years, therefore, the Norwegian Opera has been building up its first Ring, under the baton of the former East German conductor Heinz Fricke and produced by the British director Mike Ashman, but with largely native singers making their debuts in the roles.

The project is now complete, with a *Götterdämmerung* that has just opened; two cycles will be given in Oslo and British audiences will be able to see the entire Ring cycle at Norwich's Theatre Royal in June 1997.

The strength and great joy of this production is that musical and theatrical elements work not only effectively in their own terms but also in combination with each other. The production teems with fresh insights.

It opens with a striking image: the three Norns, locked in embrace, against a bare, brooding Nordic landscape. At the end of the following scene, as Brünnhilde bids farewell to Siegfried, she raises a statuesque arm and the stage revolves — an exciting moment with the orchestra in full flood. For Siegfried's Rhine journey, a curtain de-

Norwegian Opera has its first full Ring cycle, and it's headed our way

scends with a conventionally painted Rhineland scene.

If at this point the traditionalists breathe a sigh of relief, they are in for a shock. The Gibbung Hall is a vaguely futuristic vision. Hagen monitors Siegfried's progress while seated at a control desk, and bellows his repeated "Ho! Ho!" as through a public address system. The austerity of the sci-fi décor is complemented by a pair of bright red armchairs, the "throne" of Gunther and Gutrune.

Terje Stensvold's Gunther is a towering performance; he is wisely portrayed not as the usual ineffectual pawn of Hagen, but as an unscrupulous character who knows what he wants. He comes dangerously close to eclipsing Gudjon Oskarsen's Hagen vocally, but this is a fine performance in a different mould. Unlike the lumbering Hagen of tradition, Oskarsen is a prowler. Hyperactive, obsessive, a chill-

ing portrait of the misfit who turns out to be a killer.

Kjersti Ekeberg is a very acceptable Gutrune. The Siegfried of the American James O'Neal tends towards the lyrical rather than the heroic, but it is capable of good things.

Kathrine Hysing's sets and costumes for the second and third acts continue the ambivalence (and hence the universality) of the first. Minimalist in conception (a simple portal in Act II, a slab of rock in Act III), the sets are animated by John Bishop's virtuoso lighting plot, telling in its casting of facial shadow, spectacular in creating a portentously blood-red sky or, for that matter, a final conflagration.

Rosemarie Lang's Waltraute and Oskar Hillebrand's Alberich are excellent. Carol Yahr's Brünnhilde is a triumph. Originally a mezzo, Yahr just occasionally gives cause for concern at the top, but the passion with which she invests the vocal line makes it a tour de force.

Fricke's conducting is outstanding. He knows exactly how to keep things on the move. This is Wagner conducting on a par with anything that can be heard in the world today.

BARRY MILLINGTON

The best of intentions

Jamie James reflects on the brilliant highlights and ambitious disappointments that marked this year's Salzburg Easter Festival

As the Salzburg Summer Festival becomes ever more controversial, giving rise to a suspicion that it is more at the service of directorial egos than of art, the Easter Festival is now a model of serious artistic intentions, if not always of great accomplishments.

Everyone you meet in Salzburg is eager to tell you that Karajan still casts a long shadow here. Yet by any fair measure, in the three years since he was named artistic director, Claudio Abbado has made changes that have fundamentally altered the festival, putting his stamp indelibly on the ten-day event.

He instituted an avant-garde chamber music festival called Kontrapunkte, which awards a prize for composition; this year's laureate was the young Italian composer Marco Stroppa. The prize was presented to Stroppa by jury chairman Luciano Berio at a recital in the Mozarteum, which was led by the 21-year-old English conductor named Daniel Harding, formerly an assistant to Sir Simon Rattle in Birmingham. The Easter Festival has also established prizes in literature and art; this year, the honorees were the novelist Didier van Cauwelaert and the British sculptor Rachel Whiteread.

In order to open up the performances to an audience beyond the ermine-and-Louis-Vuitton set (top ticket prices here are now well over £300), Abbado has instituted a cheap pass that admits the holder to all rehearsals for the evening concerts, which are always sold out.

While this year's Easter Festival did offer some fine performances, generally artistic reach exceeded grasp. The first night, as ever, was a new opera production. Abbado invited the Italian film-maker Ermanno Olmi to produce *Otello*, with Plácido Domingo, inevitably, in the name part. The production was marred by a mountainous unitary set by Lucio Fanfani, a dreary heap of stone slabs scattered helter-skelter, which was more suggestive of a dilapidated Druid temple than the regal splendour of the Lion

of Venice. Olmi's staging was strangely inert, perhaps drained of vitality by the awkward set.

Yet these were the finest musical moments of the festival. Abbado elicited a performance of mighty intensity and bold proportions from the Berliners, who were powerfully assisted by the choruses of the Vienna State Opera and the Slovak Philharmonic Chorus of Bratislava. The playing indeed proved to be a bit too magnificent for Domingo, who had difficulty making himself heard over the orchestra at several points. By the finale of the second act, he looked drained, but he came back credibly after the interval.

Ruggero Raimondi was superb in his debut in the part of Iago, communicating the full measure of evil in Verdi and Boito's fabulous creation; at the conclusion of the Credo he seemed almost to astonish himself at the blackness of his soul. Barbara Fritoli was a real discovery as Desdemona. At first her full, rich voice seemed perhaps a bit too meaty for this role, but by the end of the love duet, it seemed just meaty enough. She was utterly captivating in the finale, executing the pianissimo of the Willow Song with impressive control.

If Abbado's Verdi gained steely strength from a dose of Germanic rigour, his performance of Bruckner's Symphony No 7 might have benefited from a mollifying southern touch. It was unquestionably a virtuosic performance by the orchestra, but in some key passages Abbado seemed to be exaggerating the score's extremes, setting one section of the orchestra against another as though it were a competition rather than a group effort. He was outshone, Bruckner-wise, by Bernard Haitink, who had conducted a tasteful,

exquisitely nuanced performance of the Fourth Symphony the evening before.

This being Salzburg, both of the Bruckner symphonies were paired with concertos that Mozart wrote here, the Fourth with Piano Concerto No 9 in E-flat major (KV271), played with his wonted suavity by Murray Perahia, and the Seventh with the Sinfonia Concertante (KV364), with Berlin concertmaster Rainer Kussmaul and first violinist Wolfram Christ taking the solo parts.

The cycle ended with a banging whimper, a clamorous and somewhat hectic performance of Beethoven's Symphony No 9. The strings were particularly disappointing, hazy and unfocused in the first movement, and less than ideally assertive in their responses to the brass in the third movement. The introduction of the "Freude" theme by the lower strings in the finale seemed rushed and perfunctory.

Bryn Terfel brought some relief with his virile, pleasingly stentorian introduction of the Ode, but it was too late: the finale careered to its conclusion at a breathless pace, and none too expressively.



WEDNESDAY APRIL 10 1996

JAZZ

The legendary blues player Ray Brown takes time out from his crowded European tour to come to Britain

THEATRE 1

From famine to feast, suddenly it's all happening for Martin Sherman, whose new play opens this week

THEATRE 2

David Hart delves deep inside the tormented mind of Gladstone, in his new play *Victoriana*

THE TIMES ARTS

THEATRE 3

... while the divine madness of the Ken Campbell mind is explored in the retrospective, *Choice Chunks*

THEATRE 4

And *The Fruit Has Turned To Jam* proves to be a wacky three-hander by the all-women Scarlet Theatre

THEATRE: Matt Wolf meets Martin Sherman, the American playwright more appreciated in Britain; plus reviews

Give no regards to Broadway

This looks like being Martin Sherman's year, despite not having written a new play for seven years. The American dramatist's new work, *Some Sunny Day*, opens tomorrow, boasting the sort of starry cast (Rupert Everett, Cheryl Campbell, Corin Redgrave) that sounds destined to enliven the West End.

And that's not all — shooting is completed on his first original film script — *Indian Summer*, starring Anthony Sher and directed by Nancy Meckler — and next month sees the start of production on a film of his best-known play, *Bent*. In addition, Sherman is working on scripts for both Mike Newell and for Nicholas Hyman; the latter project is an adaptation of *The Dybbuk*, transplanted to Atlantic City in the 1950s.

The demand is due in some measure to the success of his first film, *The Clothes In the Wardrobe*, based on Alice Thomas Ellis's novel, which was a Bafta nominee and had an acclaimed cinema run in America in 1994 under the title *The Summer House*.

"I've never even approached being this busy," Sherman says, marvelling at the shift in profile from his early years spent knocking around off-Broadway where, as he recalls, "I basically couldn't get arrested." Born in New Jersey and educated at Boston University, in the 1970s he became part of the same emerging New York generation as Lanford Wilson and Terrence McNally. But whereas those playwrights went on to win Pulitzers and Tony Awards, Sherman

began noticing one salient fact: the best productions of his work were being done in England.

"I either wasn't produced, or I was produced badly," he says, looking back on those years less with bitterness than wry humour. His free-wheeling dissection of 1960s mores, *Cracks*, had audiences "falling from trees saying it's

“The belief in America is that playwrights have to be led, coddled and corrected”

a hit" during a 1975 summer workshop at the Eugene O'Neill Theatre Centre in Connecticut, where its cast included Meryl Streep and Christopher Lloyd. The following winter, presented off-Broadway with different actors, it was mangled. "The play got the worst reviews maybe ever in the history of the New York theatre, and they were deserved," Sherman says. "By opening night, no one laughed."

It took 18 years for the laughs to resurface, this time at the King's Head in north London. "The play was finally redeemed," Sherman says of director Tim Luscombe's

production. "That gave me so much personal satisfaction."

Sherman's career is full of comparable stories. "Everyone, I think, thought *Bent* was a fluke," Sherman says of his only play to reach Broadway, in 1980. The production, starring Richard Gere, brought it its author a Tony nomination.

Several years after that production closed, Sherman was dropped by his New York agents. Indeed, it seems significant that it has taken the influence of his close friend Wendy Wasserstein, herself a highly commercial New York playwright, to get an off-Broadway showing next year of Sherman's 1983 West End play, *A Madhouse in Goa*, which starred Vanessa Redgrave in its London run.

Sherman has his own theories about his greater acceptance in London. "My plays do seem to be about outsiders, so perhaps I was always an outsider to whatever was happening in New York."

He finds London a simpler place in which to live and work. "It's much easier if you're not English than if you are; you don't have to deal with class and judgments and categories all the time. People respond to me only as an American, and whatever their prejudices, hates, or likes about an American author are, they are nothing compared to the judgments they make about their own race."

He has higher regard, too, for a playwrighting environment free of the countless workshops upon which the American theatre depends. "The belief over there is that playwrights are cripples who don't



Martin Sherman has had only one hit back home, but several in Britain. Will *Some Sunny Day*, which opens this week, be the next?

really know what they're doing and have to be led, coddled and constantly corrected." As proof, he cites initial reaction to the startling second act of *Bent*, in which two gay men incarcerated at Dachau are given the lethal task of shifting rocks from one pile to another and pause only to achieve orgasm by verbal means. "All the advice I was getting was, 'You can't have two men moving rocks for an hour', as

if I was being punished for not being the dutiful child."

What the American mainstream will make of *Some Sunny Day* is anyone's guess. Set during a steamy Egyptian summer in 1942, the play focuses on a community of foreigners in Cairo, few of whom are what they appear at first to be. Coupling a cockeyed nod to *Hamlet* with elements of cloak and dagger (among other genres), the

play has Sherman's usual ripeness alongside "a collection of people so disparate and so eccentric that they would obviously appeal to me." Several of the characters could have stepped out of the charged bohemian world of *When She Danced*, Sherman's play about Isadora Duncan that has received two separate stagings in London (and one calamitous one off-Broadway).

And if things are looking up for the playwright, that only confirms what he was told by an astrologer some 30 years ago in New York. "He said my life was going to be miserable for a long time, and then it was going to improve radically. I was very depressed at the time — but it has all been true."

● *Some Sunny Day* opens at the Hampstead Theatre (071-722 9301) tomorrow night

A Prime Minister walks in the dark

First, a personal confession. I once had an idea for a play about Gladstone, deciding that his long involvement with ladies of the street — bent on rescuing them, of course — had the stuff of evident drama to it.

He would bring one of them back to No 10 and take off her shawl, only to discover that she was a young man in disguise, an Irishman to boot, who would proceed to harangue the Grand Old Man on the Irish Question and convert him to the cause.

I decided the idea was perhaps a little too fanciful, but it was anchored in reality

compared with what happens in David Hart's play, even before Disraeli arranges to meet him in St George's Church — a metaphor for England, I suspect — and appears there wearing only a loin-cloth, hanging from the Cross, to deliver a speech on the Jewish Question.

We are more or less inside Gladstone's mind by this point. Where once he voted for Jewish Emancipation, 40 years of sitting opposite Ben Disraeli has turned him into a rabid anti-Semite. He spews out racial hatred, in the time he has to spare after allowing

Victoriana New End

pretty ladies — not all from the streets — to unbuckle the front flap of his trousers and do what is necessary.

I don't know about you, but from what I remember of Gladstone's tormented sexual anxieties this openness does not strike me as likely, particularly as we are not inside his mind in these scenes but in society drawing rooms and boudoirs. His proto-Nazi ravings are even less persuasive.

The interesting notion that

at first seemed to be Hart's dramatic question is whether or not Disraeli ever told the Queen about Gladstone's nocturnal wanderings, and if so what effect did it have on the Liberal administrations?

To ask Disraeli this question Hart brings on Mr Punch, a thoroughly nasty piece of work, in red and yellow motley, who eventually points to his hooked nose, his own nose, that is, and says words to the effect of: "You can tell me, Ben. I'm a Jew as well."

The political play is thereupon taken over by the Jewish play, and not all the golden

suavity of Jonathan Elsom's voice enabled me to follow the arguments in Disraeli's god-like, and very long, closing speech.

The author had the misfortune to lose the other leading man during rehearsals, and though Jon Harris's direction is not exactly wooden, his performance as Gladstone, though gallantly undertaken at short notice, is fairly plunk-like.

Perhaps fiercer sparks would have flashed from the character if the production had gone according to plan.

JEREMY KINGSTON



Celia Roberston (left) and Adrienne Swan as a pair of "fallen women" in *Victoriana*, David Hart's play about William Gladstone's involvement with ladies of the street

Canada calling



some of the world's leading choreographers, as can be seen by the evening programme on offer at Sadler's Wells on April 18. This is when Theatre Club members will be able to see the London premieres of works by Mark Morris and Hans van Manen (Nederlands Dans Theater), as well as the UK premiere of *Principia*, choreographed by White Oak Dance Project's Kevin O'Day.

Dance lovers can buy top-priced seats for only £12.50 (normally £17.50), enjoy a free glass of wine, and take part in an informal pre-show discussion with Rhodes. To book, telephone 0171-713 6000, quoting your membership number

EAT, DRINK AND LISTEN

IN LESS than a year Centre Stage, the theatre cabaret restaurant in Covent Garden, has become the place to go after a show. With cabaret performed by artists direct from a West End show, frequently the show you have just seen, it makes a perfect ending to a night on the town. Artists lined up for the next month include members of the cast of *Phantom of the Opera*, *Les Misérables*, *Mack and Mabel*, *Jolson and Graze*.

The normal price for a two-course dinner, with half a bottle of wine — and cabaret, of course — is £35, but Theatre Club members can pay the special anniversary price of just £19.98 on any Thursday or Friday night in April or May

HOW TO BOOK — AND JOIN

TO BOOK, please phone the listed number during normal office hours. The price printed on the ticket you receive will be the special price negotiated by the Theatre Club. There may be a transaction charge to cover postage.

TO JOIN the Theatre Club, either send a cheque for £12.50, made payable to The Theatre Club, together with your name, address and telephone number to The Theatre Club, P.O. Box 2164, Colchester CO2 8UL, or telephone 01206 791737 using your credit card. Please allow 28 days for delivery of your membership pack. For general inquiries call 0171-367 9673

THIS WEEK'S SPECIALS

- WOLVERHAMPTON Grand Theatre April 22-25 ● THEATRE Club members can buy two tickets for the price of one (normally £5.50 to £16.50) for Michael Frayn's new comedy of office infidelity, *Now You Know*, starring Adam Faith. Tel 01902 29212
- SOUTHEAST Palace Theatre April 23-25 ● ROCK and roll along to the musical *Tutti Frutti* for £7.25 (normally £10.25). Tel 01702 342564
- SOUTHSEA Kings Theatre May 8 ● TWO tickets for the price of one (normally £10.50 to £12.50) for *The Canterbury Tales*, a raucous romp starring Brian Glover and Brian Cant. Tel 01705 828282
- CARDIFF New Theatre April 29-30 ● BUY the best available stalls seats for £6 (normally £7.50 to £12.50) to see Kay Mellor's funny and touching play, *A Passionate Woman*. Tel 01222 878899
- HARROGATE Harrogate Theatre April 26 ● TWO stalls or circle seats for the price of one (normally £8 to £10.50) for David Mamet's adaptation of Chekhov's *The Three Sisters*. Club members can also attend a pre-show talk. Tel 01423 502116
- EDINBURGH Festival Theatre April 17 ● TWO stalls tickets for the price of one (normally £15.50) for Travelling Opera's production of Mozart's *Cost Fan Tuote*. Tel 0131-529 6000
- LIVERPOOL Neptune Theatre April 23-27 ● SAVE £2 on all tickets (normally £7 to £8) for John Godber's satirical and outrageous comedy about Lottery winners, *Lucky Sods*. Tel 0151-709 7844

Trolley load of Ken

Choice Chunks Waterman's Theatre

appearance of the sink-plunger, to be attached to the cranium, is a reminder that what he has been tossing into the trolley is probably old product after all, but in a different wrapper.

Nobody who has heard him talk of the Ken Dodd routines turned into pignia by an actor travelling through Melanesia will be sorry to listen to it all again. Nor the revelation that somewhere out in the New Hebrides the Duke of Edinburgh is worshipped as a god.

Mad and bad in the library

THE ground is buried beneath a spill of novels covered in that sad cellophane that speaks of public libraries. Below a clutch of battered institutional lamps, three wooden cupboards stand in a line, doors shut.

After a sudden black-out three torches switch on inside, creeping up the cracks. Out of a drawer a hand pushes up. Next thing you know in this wacky three-hander by the women's troupe Scarlet Theatre, a jaunty theme tune has piped up. A dusty librarian (Jane Guernier), her bun dishevelled, emerges from her locker, chalks up another day, and sets off on her rounds, tidying away the hand on route. She repeats the cycle with the absurdity of a clown.

Yet she has the air of being at once frantic and ground down. Indeed, she looks as if a bomb has hit the library. Her face is blackened, her behaviour perhaps shell-shocked. Two other women (Amanda Hadingue and Maeva Larkin), their blouses in shreds or blood-soaked, launch into a routine impersonating the chaps from *Dad's Army*. This may be an aggressive game or a comfort, avoiding reality.

Meanwhile Guernier keeps asking if this is the land of the library because she (or he?) is about to be betrothed to Elizabeth. Sometimes

The Fruit has Turned to Jam in the Fields Young Vic Studio

they all fall down dead. Sometimes they hide in their cupboards and sing. Hadingue and Larkin scabble on the floor like schoolgirls or lovers, fighting for a hungrily sucked humbug.

Maybe this is insane but it is also funny. Jyll Bradley's text knits the pedantic with the surreal. The cast investigate closeted women's lives, frustrated and ambiguous sexuality, ageing, discipline and uncertainty.

Still, the action lost me. Larkin smearing herself with blood may have been associated with stifled sexuality, madness and murderousness or female fertility and mortality. The significance needs sorting out and the serious moments require sharpening.

Yet, co-directed by Grainne Byrne and Emma Bernard, the cast are delightfully inventive. Scarlet Theatre is a trove of talent.

KATE BASSETT

RPO CDs and concert tickets



Three classical CDs for only £1.98 each. Buy one full price concert ticket and get another of equal value — FREE



The Times, in association with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, gives you two superb offers this week. The first is a free ticket to one of the RPO's inaugural concerts at the Royal Albert Hall on either May 12 or May 21. Buy one ticket and you get another of equal value FREE. The concerts will be conducted by Orwin Arwel Hughes and Yuri Temirkanov and feature baritone Thomas Allen and cellist Lynn Harrell. Full details appeared yesterday; another application form will be published on Saturday.

Our second offer is *The Times* Classical Collection, three CDs costing only £1.98 each, performed by the RPO. Our second, *The Romantics*, features music that signalled a new freedom of expression for composers. An order form will appear on Friday.

THE ROMANTICS TRACK LISTING (playing time 63.29)
1. Beethoven symphony No 9 in D minor, Choral 4th movt. Conductor: Raymond Leppard, soloists Gillian Webster, Catherine Wyn-Rogers, Marilyn Hill, Robert Heyward (18.14); 2. Schubert symphony No 5 in B flat major. Conductor: Howard Shalby (16.42); 3. Schubert piano quintet in A major Trout 4th movt theme and variations. Director: Jonathan Carney, piano Ronan O'Hara (21.49); 4. Tchaikovsky *Roméo and Juliet* overture. Conductor: Yuri Simonov (21.49); 5. Chopin piano concerto No 2 in F minor 2nd movt. Conductor: Gilbert Varga, soloist Sequeira Costa (19.26)

Smile, you're on closed-circuit TV. Rachel Kelly reports on the new high-security estates

Home is where the fortress is

A senior policeman has spoken out at what he terms a "worrying" trend in the housing market: the growth of walled estates often employing private security guards.

Denis O'Connor is deputy chief constable of Kent and a member of the committee which wrote a recent report for the Independent Police Foundation and Policy Studies Institute on the role and responsibility of the police.

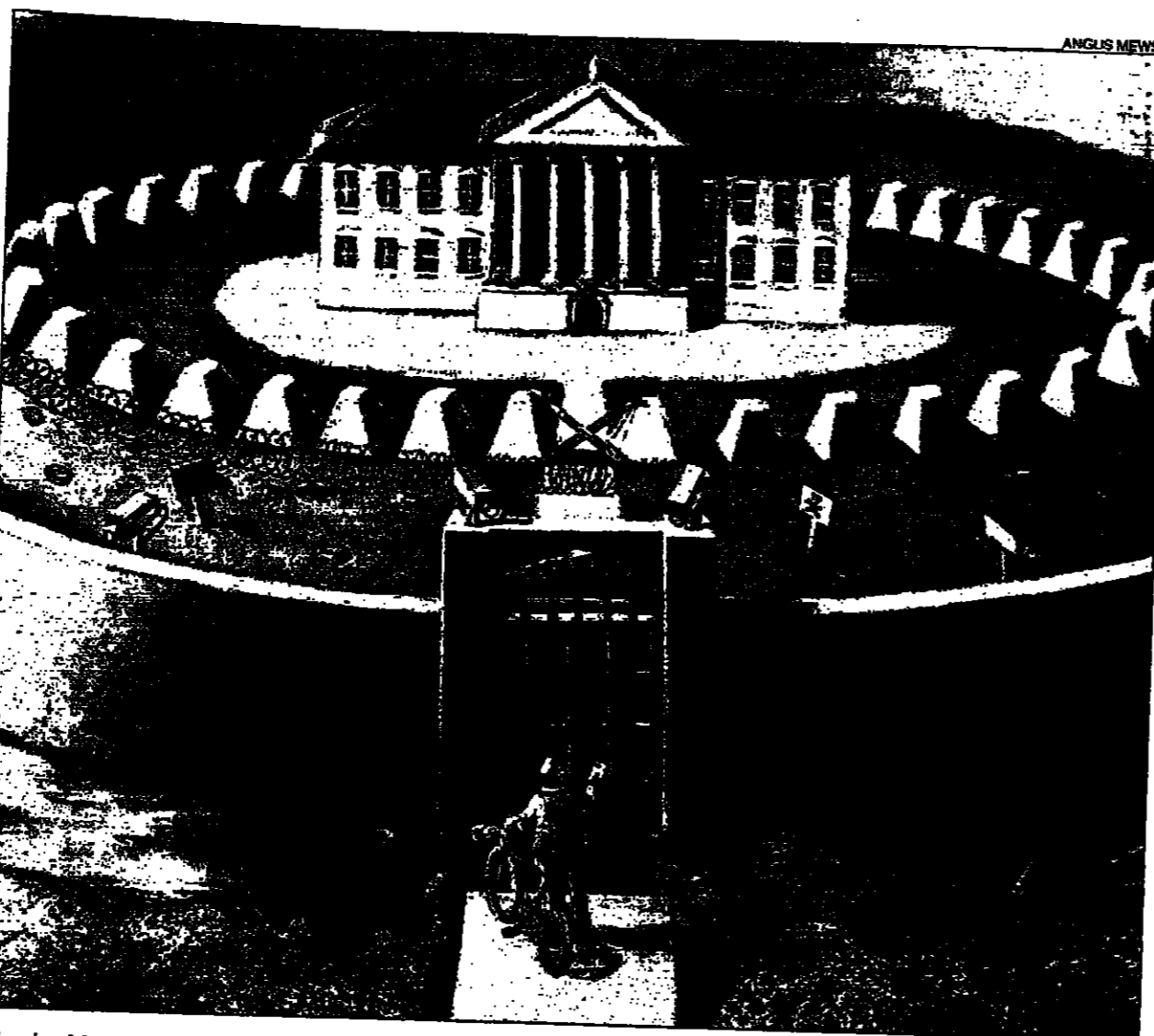
He cites anecdotal evidence which suggests the growth of what he terms "private public space": upmarket executive housing estates where public access is limited. For all that estate agents extol the virtues of such schemes, there are wider, more worrying implications for society.

"I understand people's concerns, but there is a danger of a *Blade Runner*-type future," Mr O'Connor says. "Those who can afford it will feel a limited but tenuous security while they hear the police sirens going outside." The danger is that the type of people who are choosing to live apart in these developments are precisely those who are the most suited and the best resourced to play an active role in rejuvenating and contributing to a wider community.

"Such people are taken out of play. They are insulated from the world," he says. "There is a celebration of individual success at the expense of collective responsibility."

Criminals naturally then prey on easier targets outside such estates, although residents are vulnerable should they venture outside. These estates follow the pattern in Brazil and in America where such developments are commonplace.

Roger Humber, the director of the House Builders' Federation, defends developers by saying that they are responding to consumer demand, especially in inner cities. "These schemes are a shame in some ways, but they are a



CASE STUDY

TODDINGTON Park, in Toddington, Bedfordshire, is ringed by two sets of security fences with electronic gates. The 29.5-acre estate is fully floodlit and in case of emergency, residents can signal the estate office and the gatehouse lodge via a special communication system. Gates, floodlights and the doors to the doorman's cages can all be operated by remote control.

"We've never had an intruder, and we never have to worry," says the co-owner, Pauline Wilkinson, who is selling Toddington Park for £1.5 million through Savills.

Ms Wilkinson and her husband invested about £250,000 in revamping Toddington Park when they moved there in 1992, even though it had never been burgled.

"Inside the inner security fence, we can live a relaxed normal lifestyle," she says. "If we wake up in the middle of a warm night, and want to take a breath of fresh air, we just open a window without worrying about setting off the security alarms. At friends' houses in London it's just the opposite. They have bars, massive bolts and chains, alarms and locks on all the windows, and panic buttons."

Additional research by Joanna Norland.

minority. Most ordinary family suburban housing is not like this."

Even some of those involved with development are ambivalent. "If your house is inaccessible behind gates, you are locked away from your community, and there is very little neighbourly contact," says Lawrence Leigh, house manager for Elliot Mews, a new St John's Wood development of four houses selling for between £325,000 and £395,000, surrounded by electronic gates. "That's certainly not how I grew up. But for our customers, the key issue is security."

Estate agents agree. Security is the market's current obsession. Ian Stewart, director of country homes at Savills, says: "Ten years ago agents never mentioned security to a client. Now clients consider good security a big plus." This is especially true in the country where isolated houses are vulnerable.

Lassmans, a London estate agent, recently sold a Nash house in Hanover Terrace in Regent's Park, London, with bullet-proof glass in the windows and steel sheets in all the internal doors. If an intruder broke in, the owner could lock himself in any of the rooms and call for help.

The figures confirm the public's growing obsession with security. In 1995, 239,000 domestic alarms and security systems were installed, up from 201,000 in 1992. The security industry itself has been growing between 8 and 15 per cent a year since 1990, says Alex Volossevich, commercial manager for the National Approval Council of Security Systems. Between 1991 and 1995, he says, the total value of sales and rentals of alarms and systems increased from £1.06 billion to £1.9 billion.

Daniel O'Neill, the proprietor of Home Security Services in London, says: "Eight years ago, only people with a lot of valuables were getting

alarms. Now, people are buying alarm systems for anything from a de-luxe country house to a council town block. It's a good idea. You probably get more break-ins in a three-bedroom semi than in a country house, because most burglars are opportunists, and will break into a home that looks less protected."

But security clearly need not mean walled estates. Developers can take advantage of the existing good practice guidelines issued by the police to help to cut out crime by avoiding road layouts which provide easy get-

aways for criminals and nooks and crannies in which they can hide.

Perhaps one of the best deterrents is the use of closed-circuit television cameras. "Their effectiveness in inhibiting street crime has been widely demonstrated, up and down the country," says Mr O'Connor.

Berkley Homes' Barnes Waterside development, currently under construction on the south bank of the Thames, has a video-entry system to the flats and closed-circuit television surveillance in the houses. The houses and flats cost between £115,000 and £1.5 million.

Get yourself reconvered

Rachel Kelly and Michael Jones on turning flats back into houses

Developers are turning converted flats in period properties back into family houses. The 1980s saw a rash of conversions of family houses into flats as demand from first-time buyers swelled. Now the tide has turned.

Charles Ellingworth of the buyers' agents Property Vision says: "There are fewer buyers in today's market looking for a one-bedroom flat in their mid to late twenties, many wait until they are in their thirties. Then they will be more likely to have families and to look for a two or three-bedroom house."

According to Nick Pearce of the London estate agents Beane Pearce: "Demand for large family houses has always been strong, particularly over the past few years, while supply has been so short because families have not been moving."

The trend is confirmed by some London councils, including Westminster, Islington and Wandsworth, which report a fall in the number of planning requests for conversions.

Reconverting property makes financial sense. For example, a property in London can be reconvered into a large family house for £200,000. To refurbish four flats, each with their own kitchens, bathrooms and central heating would cost much more. Developers also have to find only one purchaser rather than four.

After the war, many houses were divided into flats because the owners could not afford to maintain their property. In the late 1950s, mortgages became available for the purchase of converted, self-contained flats, which opened up a new market.

Some of these conversions were very poor and scant

thought was put into their design. This has resulted in most of the properties requiring much work and modernisation.

Winkworth in London confirms the reconversion trend. A large freehold house in St Anne's Terrace, St John's Wood was bought last year as two maisonettes with an estimated combined value of £500,000. Then the developer, Dreamgate, restored the property as a family house with four bedrooms, two bathrooms, a study and a patio garden and placed it on the market for £650,000.

Other areas in London which have seen similar developments include Putney and Kensington.

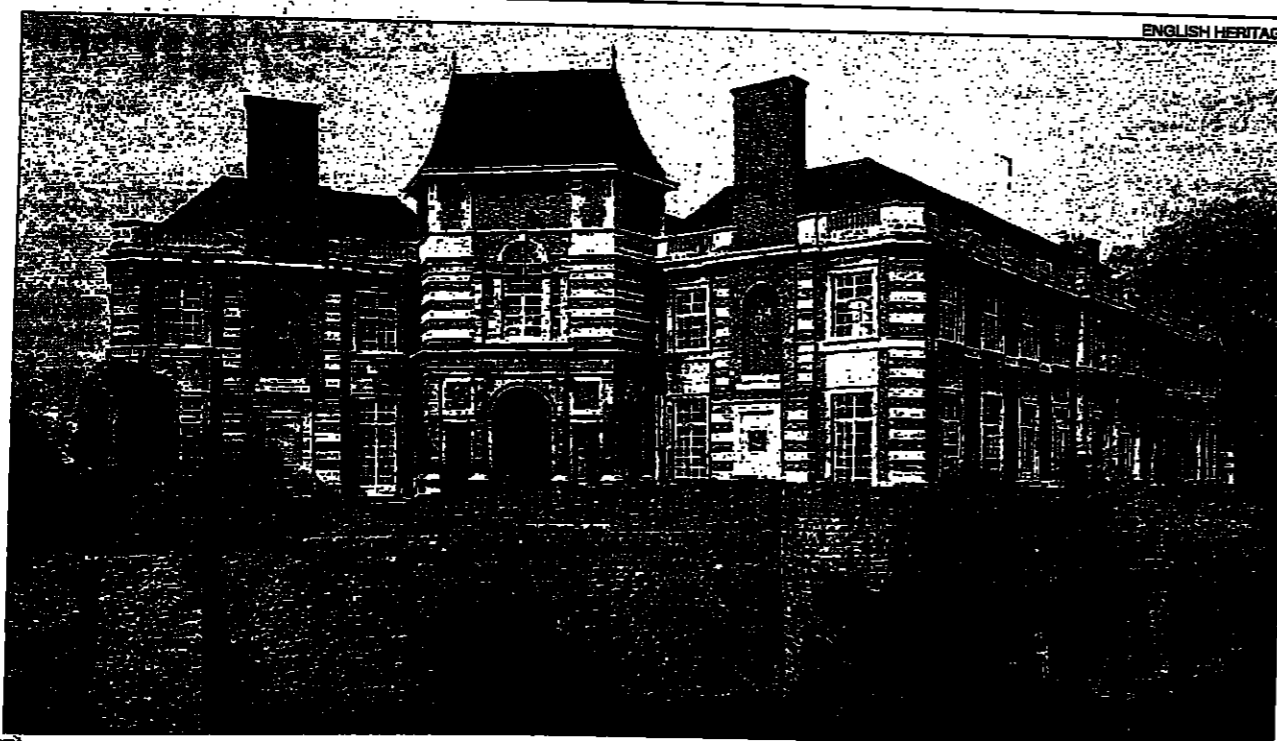
Robert Pemberton of Winkworth's Putney office says: "In order to achieve ownership of the entire house, the buyer generally acquires the freehold flat on the ground floor and then buys the leases above as they become available."

The property developer Northacre has begun work on restoring the flats in Earls Terrace, Kensington into houses. The development is due for completion by 1999.

John Hunter of Northacre says: "We shall be taking a few houses at a time and creating diverse and individual styles and layouts, from a contemporary look to a classical design. We aim to reinstate the whole row of houses to its original form."

The Georgian properties on Earls Terrace look tall and narrow from the outside but Northacre plans to reconvered them into large six-bedroom houses.

"Each house in the terrace benefits from a 100ft rear garden, giving the feeling of being in your own London country estate," says Mr Hunter.



Sir Jocelyn Stevens chose Eltham Palace as the venue of the extravagant party he recently gave for heiress Vivien Duffield

Hidden historic treat

Eltham Palace, hidden in one of the less elegant suburbs of south London, has become the backdrop for stylish parties for the first time since the Courtauld family left it more than 50 years ago.

Sir Jocelyn Stevens chose the palace as the venue of the extravagant party he recently gave in honour of the heiress Vivien Duffield. English Heritage, which he chairs, opened Eltham Palace to the public earlier this year.

Stephen and Virginia Courtauld of the wealthy textile family, who acquired Eltham Palace in the 1930s, would be pleased to see it once again the scene of entertaining. They used the Great Hall for parties after renovating it and building Courtauld House, an Art Deco mansion, on the side at a cost of £2 million.

The Courtaulds wanted the benefits of a country house within striking distance of London which was large enough to house weekend guests and their own extensive art collections. The Courtaulds built a swimming pool and squash court. Surrounded by 14 acres of beautiful grounds, which afforded views across to the centre of London, they could indulge their passion for gardening. They landscaped the grounds and dug a sunken rose garden. Even today it is possible to stand in the gardens and forget that Lewisham is just around the corner.

Eltham Palace, despite its location, was a royal retreat for more than 500 years. Its history dates back to 1086 when Odo, Bishop of Bayeux and half-brother of William the Conqueror, held the manor of Eltham. In the following centuries Edward II and Edward III lived there, as did Richard II. Henry IV was married by proxy to Joan of Navarre at Eltham in 1402.

But by 1649 Eltham Palace was described as "much out of repair and soe

Eltham Palace has a long and colourful past. Leyla Linton on its revival

not tenable". Shortly afterwards Parliament sold Eltham and it was partly demolished. In the 17th and 18th centuries the palace became a farm and the Great Hall, once of England's last remaining medieval royal halls, was used as a barn.

The Courtaulds acquired the lease from the Crown on condition they renovated both the hall and moat. Only a sliding screen separates the Great Hall from the Art Deco mansion, but the exterior style of the house blends with the 15th-century hall better than might be expected.

Inside, Courtauld House has an eclectic mix of design styles. A wide range of sumptuous materials was used to decorate the house including exotic hardwoods, chrome, onyx, leather and marble.

Several rooms reflect the "Cunard style" made popular by fashionable cruise liners of the age with fitted furniture and smooth veneered surfaces, often with curved ends. Some connecting walls had "portholes" and the guest bedrooms were laid out like cabins. Cleverly concealed lighting features in many rooms.

In sharp contrast, the drawing room has been described as more Californian in style. The room had painted beams and bas reliefs in the window by Gilbert Ledward. The entrance hall, or rotunda, is perhaps the first example of modern Swedish interior design in England. Designed by Rolf Engstromer, it is top-lit by a glass dome and features marquetry panels depicting Stockholm and Venice. The rotunda opened straight onto the terrace, ideal for entertaining.

The most sumptuous room in the house is Virginia Courtauld's bathroom, which has an onyx bath and gold-plated fittings. The gold mosaic recess once housed a marble copy of Psyche, lover of Cupid.

The Courtaulds designed the house so that even Mah-jong, the pet lemur, had its own living quarters — a heated cage upstairs on the first floor connected by a bamboo ladder to its own kitchen downstairs.

The house incorporated domestic innovations such as underfloor heating, synchronised electric clocks in every room, a single centralised vacuum cleaner located in the basement with sockets in every room, as well as a Tannoy system which would allow Stephen Courtauld to speak to everyone else in the house. It is believed that Virginia Courtauld blocked the Tannoy in her room as she became tired of her husband shouting at her.

Despite creating a house which perfectly reflected their lifestyle, the Courtaulds eventually tired of life in London's suburbs and after only six years decided to move to Southern Rhodesia, where they built a new home with many similarities to the design of their house in Eltham.

The lease of the house was given to the War Department and it was later used as an education centre, conference centre and officers' mess for the Army. It is to their credit that most of the house remains as it was in the time of the Courtaulds.

Eltham Palace, Court Road, Eltham, London SE9 is open to the public from 10am to 4pm on Thursday, Friday and Sunday (October to March) and 10am to 6pm (April to September). Admission to the Courtauld House and gardens: adults £4, concessions £3, children £2. Admission to gardens only: adults £2, concessions £1.50, children £1. English Heritage Members free. Admission to the Courtauld House is by guided tour which can be booked on 0181-294 2548.

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Man from Minnesota could be about to capture his first major title

Lehman's broad shoulders ready for green jacket

FROM JOHN HOPKINS, GOLF CORRESPONDENT, IN AUGUSTA

BEN CRENSHAW and Tom Lehman are, respectively, the reigning Masters champion and the man who nearly won in 1994. Amid enough emotion to launch a ship on the nearby Savannah river, Crenshaw edged home by one stroke.

Having holed the winning putt, he bent so that his head was almost between his knees and cried while Carl Jackson, his caddy, put a consoling hand on his shoulder. This image has been shown on television dozens of times these past few days.

The previous year, Lehman might have slipped the famous green jacket around his beery, working-man's shoulders. If, that is, a couple of his putts had gone in on Sunday afternoon and if José María Olazábal had not laid on one of the greatest displays of

scrambling of all time over the last 36 holes to snatch victory. As Olazábal, now in Spain, seeks a cure for the rheumatoid arthritis that he is suffering in his feet, Lehman is a quiet favourite to win the sixtieth Masters.

Crenshaw has a golden putter. Lehman an iron will. They are, in short, the wearer of the green jacket and a man worthy of wearing one.

Crenshaw is as much a part of the Masters as Amen Corner is of Augusta National. Of the 500 golf books that Crenshaw has in his library, perhaps 50 are to do with Bobby Jones and Augusta. Julie Crenshaw, Ben's wife, says that 80 per cent of her husband's stories centre on Jones. Mementoes of Augusta dominate their house in Austin, Texas.

When you tell Crenshaw that you played golf at East Lake, Jones's home club in Atlanta, his eyes light up. The talk becomes animated. He questions, too. "You hear Ben talk about Jones and you realise Ben could tell you everything about him," Brent Buckman, Crenshaw's university room-mate, said. "It's as if Jones is his best friend. I think Ben has patterned his actions after Jones. It's almost as if he knew Jones."

However, there is no similar link between Augusta National and Lehman. Indeed, Lehman and major championships have come to be mentioned in the same breath only recently, because Lehman is a latecomer, who burst into prominence two years ago and competed in his first Ryder Cup last September. Lehman, 37 last month, is playing in only his sixteenth major championship. Fred Couples, who is seven months younger, has played in 48.

Crenshaw, who is competing in his 25th Masters, has finished eighth or higher at Augusta 11 times. Lehman's best finish in three visits was second in 1994.

Crenshaw grew up at the Country Club of Austin, Texas, playing alongside Tom Kite. Lehman was born and grew up in Minnesota and could play golf only three months each year.

Crenshaw dedicated his victory last year to Harvey Penick, his teacher, who had died a week previously. Penick was a small, shrivelled man with an abundance of homespun golfing wisdom, much of which appeared in a series of books.

"The woods are full of long drivers," was one of Penick's aphorisms. "If you have a bad grip, you don't want a good swing," was another. "As for your grip pressure, keep it light. Arnold Palmer grips the club tight, but you're not Arnold Palmer," was a third,



Crenshaw, successful in 1995, was overcome by emotion after sinking the final putt

and "golf has probably kept more people sane than psychiatrists have," a fourth. Lehman had no such guru.

While Crenshaw was a leading light on the US PGA circuit, Lehman was striving might and main to get on to it. He had to attend the qualifying school 11 times before making it in his home country.

While he was struggling, he played in Asia. "You can't afford to let a shot slip away over there," he said, "because you don't want to have to sit in

Taipei for a week with nothing to do." Quite.

In the Ryder Cup last year, Lehman won two points out of a possible three, defeating Severiano Ballesteros on the 15th green. Crenshaw was beaten in foursomes, fourballs and his singles.

Crenshaw, 44, may never win another major championship. The fires have been dampened by age, his young family and the pressure on him to stop and say "Hi" to everyone, a pressure that he

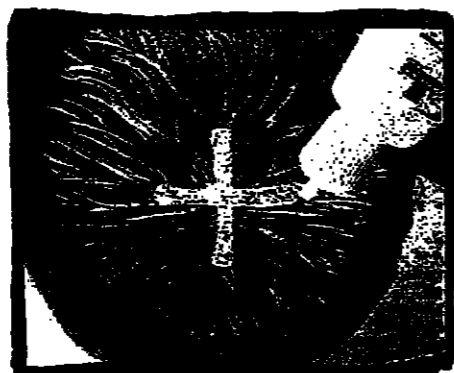
almost always accedes to. It does not matter. He already has two Masters titles to his name, one of 13 men to win more than once.

Lehman's career has reached no such level of success. He has won only twice as a professional in the United States, but he has finished in the top ten in each of the past six events that he has entered this year.

Crenshaw's time was 1995, Lehman's could be 1996. He would say amen to that.



Lehman, foiled in 1994, would be a popular winner



To many this concept would sound melodramatic. Not to us. Only dandruff sufferers know what a heavy cross this condition is to bear. An itchy, itchy scalp will not only cause physical distress, it can undermine your confidence, too. Our research taught us that dandruff is caused by a microbe. A medical condition demanding a reliable medical solution - First Aid.

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The romantic pathfinder

A Little Scandal is an Excellent Thing. Radio 4, 8.05pm.

"It is impossible not to laugh at her: it is equally impossible not to read her." So wrote G.K. Chesterton, about Ouida. She was a 19th-century Barbara Cartland, author of bodice-rippers, pathfinder for Mills and Boon. Chrys Salt's drama-documentary about Ouida (accurately overplayed by Cheryl Campbell) begins shrilly, but soon settles down to something that is kinder on the ears. Salt's narration, spoken by Denys Hawthorne, is as overwrought as Ouida's prose. The peacock of her imagination struggled in its cage" is the sort of thing I mean. Ouida's tombstone bore the inscription "Writer of incomparable novels" Sadly, this PR-type person came too late to help her financially. She died in poverty, with only a dog for company.

Seymour, the Fractal Cat. Radio 4, 11.00pm.

I was waiting for it to happen, and it happens tonight on Radio 4. I am only surprised that it took so long for someone on radio to think up a story about an all-thinking, independently-motivated computer. Gary Purser's comedy serial goes even further than that. The computer (John Hegley) can talk, too; and so can its owner's ginger tomcat (Greg Proops). All that is missing is the mouse - and any PC tomcat (Greg Proops). All that is missing is the mouse - and any PC tomcat (Greg Proops). All that is missing is the mouse - and any PC tomcat (Greg Proops). All that is missing is the mouse - and any PC tomcat (Greg Proops).

Peter Daville

RADIO ONE

PM Stereo, 4.00pm Clive Wrenn 6.30 Chris Evans 8.00 Kevin Greening 12.00 Lisa Farnon, incl at 12.30-12.45pm Newsbeat and at 1.30pm News 2.00 Nicky Campbell 4.00 Dave Pearce, incl at 5.30-5.45pm Newsbeat 6.15 The Net 6.30 The Mix 7.00 Evening Session 8.00 Mark Radcliffe 10.00p Wendy Lloyd, incl at 12.15pm The Net

RADIO 2

PM Stereo, 6.00pm Sarah Kennedy 7.30p Wake Up to Wogan 9.15p Pause for Thought 9.30p Ken Bruce, incl at 10.00p Pick of the Hits 11.30p Jimmy Young 1.30pm Debbie Thorne 3.30p Ed Stewart 5.05p John Dunn 7.00p Jim Lloyd with Folk on 2 8.00p Bluegrass Ramble 21st 8.30p Leaders' Topics (54) 9.00p Celine Dion 9.30p Nigel Ogden 10.30p The Jamesons 12.05pm Steve Madden, incl Pause for Thought 3.00-6.00pm Alex Lester

RADIO 5 LIVE

5.00am Morning Reports 6.00 The Breakfast Programme 8.35 The Magazine with Diana Madill, incl 10.35p Euronews 11.30p Wildlife News 12.00p Midday with Mair, incl at 12.30p News 2.05p Ruscoe On Five, incl at 3.05p Ruscoe Returns; 3.45p Entertainment News 4.00p John Inverdale Nationwide, incl at 5.45p Entertainment News 7.00p News Extra 7.35p Trevor Brooking's Football Night 10.05p News Talk with Jeremy Vine 11.00p Night Extra incl at 11.15p Financial World Tonight 12.05pm After Hours 2.05p Up All Night

TALK RADIO

6.00am Sandy Wan 7.00p Simon Bates 10.00p Jonathan King 12.00p Tommy Boyd 2.00pm Anna Rasmussen 4.00p Scott Chisholm 7.00p Sean Bolger 10.00p James Whale 1.00-6.00pm Ian Collins

WORLD SERVICE

All times in BST. 5.00am Newsdesk 5.30p Europe Today 6.00p Newsdesk 6.30p Europe Today 7.00p News 7.15p The World Today 7.30p Megames 8.00p News 8.15p Off the Shelf 8.30p Discovery 9.00p News in German 9.15p Concert Hall 10.00p News 10.05p World Business Report 10.15p Andy Kershaw 10.45p Sport 11.00p Newsdesk 11.30p BBC English 11.45p Off the Shelf 12.00p Newsdesk 12.30p Thirty-Minute Drama 1.00p News in German 1.30p Composer of the Month 2.00p Newsdesk 3.00p News 3.05p Outlook 3.30p Megames 4.00p News 4.05p Sport 4.15p BBC English 4.30p News in German 5.00p Europe Today 5.30p World Business Report 5.45p Britain Today 6.00p News 6.10p World Today 6.25p Science View 6.30p News in German 7.00p Newsdesk 7.30p Discovery 1.00p Newsdesk 9.00p News 9.01p Outlook 9.25p Words of Faith 9.30p Multirack X-Press 10.00p News 10.05p World Business Report 10.15p Britain Today 10.30p Midday 11.00p Newsdesk 11.30p World Today 11.45p Sport 12.00p News 12.05p Science View 12.15p Country Style 12.30p Multirack X-Press 1.00p Newsdesk 1.30p From Our Own Correspondent 1.45p Britain Today 2.00p Newsdesk 2.30p Outlook 2.55p Word of Faith 3.00p Newsdesk 3.30p Britain Today 4.00p News 4.15p Sport 4.30p Europe Today

CLASSIC FM

4.00pm Mark Griffiths 6.00p Miles Rod 9.00p Henry Kelly 12.00p Margaret Howard 2.00pm Concerto 3.00p Jamie Crook 6.00p Newswatch 6.30p Sonnet 7.00p Gardening Forum (1) 8.00p Evening Concert 10.00p Michael Mappin 1.00pm Mel Cooper

VIRGIN RADIO

6.00am Russ 11p John 9.00p Richard Skinner 12.00p Graham Dene 4.00pm Nicky Howe 7.30p Paul Coyle 10.00p Mark Forest 2.00-6.00pm Robin Banks

RADIO 3

6.00am On Air, Victoria (Misses include post list): Sternheimer (Sonata in F, Op 31); Verdi (Violin Concerto in F, Op 7 No 1); Respighi (Autumn Poem); Scarlatti (Sonata in E, K 10); Vaughan Williams (The Shepherd's of the Delectable Mountains) 9.00p Morning Collection, with Catherine Young, Bach (Oboe Concerto in D minor, BWV 1069); Saint-Saëns (Mon coeur s'ouvre à ta voix, Samson et Delilah); Chopin (Polonaise in F sharp minor, Op 44); Bruch (Symphony No 1 in E flat) 10.00p Musical Encounters with Andrew Lloyd Webber (Overture: Die Färs) 10.12p Artist of the Week: Boris Berezovsky, piano Liszt (Etude d'execution transcrisante No 5, Faux follets) 10.18p Bartok (Rhapsody No 1); Liszt (Etude d'execution transcrisante No 6, Violon); Haydn (String Quartet in A, Op 55 No 1); Handel (Gulio Cesare, Act 3 excerpt); Liszt (Etude d'execution transcrisante No 7, Eroica); Rubinstein (Cello Sonata No 1 in D); Mozart (Horn Quartet in E flat, K 407) 12.00p Composer of the Week: Murfield, Suite No 3 in A minor: Illustres Primat; Sonata per violino e basso; Sonata No 3 in A, Antonino Inbuto 1.00pm Birmingham Lunchtime Concert, live from Studio One, Pebble Mill, Elizabeth Wallisch, violin, Richard Tunnicliffe, cello, Paul Nicholson, harpsichord, perform pieces by Bach

RADIO 4

6.00am News: Briefing incl Weather 6.10p Farming Today 6.25p Prayer for the Day 6.30p Today 7.00p 6.25p Sport 7.45p Thought for the Day 8.40p Times from Women Gardeners 8.58p Weather 9.00p News 9.05p Midweek, with Times columnist Libby Purves 10.00p News: A Retiring Fellow, by William Donaldson (2/4) 10.30p Woman's Hour 11.30p Gardeners' Question Time, from Slough (1) 12.00p News: You and Yours, with Mark Easton 12.25pm Maughan's Eye View. The last in the series of Somerset Maughan's short stories narrated by Dirk Bogarde. Kathleen thinks her sister Millicent is hiding something about her husband's death 12.55p Weather 1.00p The World at One, with Nick Clarke 1.40p The Archers 1.55p Shipping Forecast 2.00p News: London Particulars. The first of a two-part Victorian detective thriller by John Peacock. With Todd Canty as Bow Street Runner Pity Shepherd, and Elizabeth Spriggs as brothel-keeper Polly Jenkins 2.45p Treasure Islands, Anthony Horowitz, talks to Michael Rosen about his books for children 3.00p News: The Afternoon Shift 4.00p News 4.05p Kaleidoscope Paul Gambaccini reviews the latest film releases including John Travolta and Christian Slater in Broken Arrow and Al Pacino and John Cusack in City Hall 4.45p Short Story, Fred, by Mary Jones. About to sit down to a welcome cup of tea, Mavis and Gladys are interrupted by a series of calls 5.00p PM 5.50p Shipping Forecast 5.55p Weather 6.00p Six O'Clock News 6.30p Counterpoint. The general knowledge music quiz with Ned Sherin (1) 7.00p News: 7.05p The Archers 7.20p Science and Wonder. Russell Stannard, Professor of Physics at the Open University, examines Charles Darwin's theory of evolution, from a Christian perspective (2/5) 8.05p A Little Scandal is an Excellent Thing. See Choice 8.35p The Easter Rising. Fintan O'Toole takes a look at the failed militant Irish nationalist rebellion which took place in Dublin in 1916 9.00p Costing the Earth. Mark Whitaker looks at what man has made of the Durian Dales, a place of bleak beauty and fragile ecology 9.30p Kaleidoscope (1) 9.59p Weather 10.00p The World Tonight 10.45p Book at Bedtime. Stalin's Nose Alistair McGowan reads Rory MacLean's story (8/10) Seymour the Fractal Cat See Choice 11.30p Paradise Lost in Space. The final part of Colin Swash's comedy, starring Tony Robinson, David Hogg and Louise Lombard (1) 12.00p News incl 12.27am Weather 12.30p The Late Book. Devil is a Slave Drama, by Walter Mosley (8/10) 12.48p Shipping 1.00p As World Service

TODAY'S FIXTURES

FOOTBALL

Kick-off 7.30p unless stated
ENDSLEIGH INSURANCE LEAGUE
 First division
 Millwall v Birmingham (7.45)
Bell's Scottish League
 Premier division
 Celtic v Kilmarnock (7.45)
HEARTS v RANGERS
BEAZER HOMES LEAGUE Midland division
 Evesham v Solihull, R.C Warwick v Redditch Southern division Poole v Trowbridge Dr Marten's Cup Semi-final, second leg: Salisbury v Baldock
UNION LEAGUE Premier division
 Molineux v Hyde Postponed: Boston v Gussley First division: Bradford Park Avenue v Congleton President's Cup Semi-final: First leg: Bamber Bridge v Workop Second leg: Bamber Bridge v Workop
ICIS LEAGUE Premier division: Yeading v Boreham Wood Second division: Leatherhead v Basingstoke Carlton Trophy Semi-final: Banstead v Tilbury
AVON INSURANCE COMBINATION First division: Bristol City v Tottonham; Bristol Rovers v Luton; Chelsea v Ipswich (at Kingstons FC, 7.00); Southampton v Oxford Utd (at Meadowfield) v Stoke Brighton (at Wexley Town, 2.00); Wimbledon v Watford (2.00) Second division: Plymouth v Cheltenham; Torquay United v Bournemouth (7.00)
PONTINS CENTRAL LEAGUE (1) First division: Blackburn Rovers v Everton; Bolton v Oldham; Manchester United v West Bromwich Albion; Notts County v Newcastle United; Sheffield United v Stoke Second division: Aston Villa v Huddersfield; Blackpool v Barnsley; Leicester v Manchester City; Middlesbrough v Port Vale; York v Preston
LEAGUE OF WALES Elbow Vale v Alan Lido; Holywell v Caernarfon; Inter Cardiff v Brion Ferry Postponed: Connah's Quay v Bangor City; Connah's Quay v Bangor
MINERVA SOUTH MIDLANDS LEAGUE O'Brien/McGeele Premier division Cup Semi-final: Hatfield v Biggleswade

RUGBY UNION

Courage Clubs Championship First division Gloucester v Bath (7.45)
WILLIS COWIEN HEBERNIA CUP Royal Navy v RAF (at Twickenham, 3.00)
OTHER SPORT
 SPEEDWAY 7.30p: mixed championships: British semi-finals (Poole) Premier League: Hull v Coventry; Long Eaton v Edinburgh

WORD-WATCHING

Answers from page 43

BURSA

(c) So the citadel of Carthage was called. The tale is that when Dido came to Africa she brought the natives "as much land as could be encompassed by a bull's hide". The agreement was made, and Dido cut the hide into things so as to enclose a space sufficient for a citadel.

GUELPH

(b) In medieval Italy the rival factions of Guelphs and Ghibellines occupy most of the political history of the period with their quarrels. The Guelphs were the papal and popular party, the Ghibellines, the imperial and aristocratic party. Both names are derived (absurdly) from rival German factions of the 12th century. Ghibelline is an Italian attempt at *Waldbinger*, a small town in Württemberg, used as a warcry by the followers of Emperor Conrad III.

PUCELLE

(c) French for "The Maid". So, the Maid of Orleans, Joan of Arc. Chapelain and Voltaire wrote a poem called *La Pucelle*. *La Pucelle d'Orléans* was canonised in 1920 as the second patron of France but as such is not recognised by the State. There has been no official patron saint of France since the separation of Church and State in 1905.

CANEPHORUS

(a) A sculptured figure of a youth or maiden bearing a basket on the head. In ancient Athens the canephoros bore the sacred things necessary at the feasts of the gods.

SOLUTION TO WINNING CHESS MOVE

1. Qh5! Kg7 (1... Kd8; 2. Nf7+ Kg4; 3. Nh6 is mate); 2. Qh7+ Kf8; 3. Qxg6 and Black's cause is hopeless.

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Caught on the hop by change of sentiment

Nice to see that Easter sentiment does not dawdle long in the television schedules. Anyone tuning in to *An Obsession* with... Rabbits last night on BBC2 may have been somewhat surprised to see the skinned, hunted, gassed, and finally choked in a Perspex coffin for medical research. I was surprised myself, but then I'm simple. I had expected lots of little pink noses twitching cutely to camera; plus endless shots of that curious bouncy locomotion, perhaps observed romantically by moonlight. *Bright Eyes, la la, burning like fire*. Yes, you can stay up to watch the rabbits, darling," mummies assured their clamouring youngsters. But afterwards, the night bedtime reading of *Little Grey Rabbit* was curiously marred by the kiddie taking a bunny toy and a chopping board, and with a few key incisions, attempting to

remove all its fur in one go. There is more than one kind of obsession, of course. Last night, killing or harming rabbits was the life and breath of "The Farmer," "The Hunter," "The Warmer," and "The Medical Researcher" — all of whom, interestingly, were men. No effort had been made to blur the gender divide here. Only "The Fancier" (a woman) actually wanted to scratch ears and cuddle. With her on the daffy female side were "The Spinner" and "The Zoologist". I don't know which gender should resent this stereotyping more, but I was reminded of *The Mists*, when Clark Gable and Marilyn Monroe wrestle with a shotgun in the desert morning sun. Gable wants to shoot the rabbits who've eaten his lettuce; Monroe, fearful in jeans, insists that they are all petals in God's daisy chain. Most articulate last night was the medical researcher, whom God had clearly intended for poli-

tics. He evinced, with clever plausibility, that his rabbits were "heros", whose lives served a higher purpose. Mm, *An Obsession* with... Rabbits was one of those stylish snapshot films with no commentary, enjoyable and light, in an occasional series which would normally deal with sheds or balloons or something. Taking an animal as the subject isn't dangerously near real, big issues, that, as Anthony Thomas's *Man and Animal* (ITV) recently pointed out, are dividing people and cultures increasingly.

I was a funny old night. I can't pretend I was inspired. However, the second episode of *Cardiac Arrest* (BBC1) was a humdinger. Not having followed this drama very closely in the past, I can't tell you when it made the transition from video to film, but I'm sure *Casualty* is kicking it. When *Casualty* attempted the

REVIEW



Lynne Truss

great leap forward a couple of years ago, it was forced to leap back again: succumbing to public pressure, it apologetically reversed the process. Apparently audiences were bored when they no longer saw the old familiar fat, soapy quality. They didn't want *Casualty* to get above itself. They liked the leaden editing. They wanted to be able to count the freckles on Charlie's arms.

But *Cardiac Arrest* has other tricks up its sleeve, besides the lighting, and besides the notorious sick humour, which initially seemed gratuitous but now seems naturalistic. Narrative surprise, for example, is something *Casualty* has long since wished a cubic curtain across. Also, energy, ambition. If the key image of *Casualty* is a lumpy Charlie rolling his eyes, the key images of *Cardiac Arrest* are young, callous medics with sharp little faces and glossy skin, some of them with rollerskates. *Casualty* is all passive and reactive: if it could speak, it would say, "Oh, what now?" *Cardiac Arrest* just says, rather aggressively, "What?"

Last night's main medical story involved the removal of a tumour, and a false reassurance of tragic Andor, brought him home, and then criminally stamped his passport. "Indefinite leave to remain". The message was that you can't

choose who you fall in love with. Although these people had chosen, of course. That was their problem. The delicacy of *Straight from the Heart* was exemplary: it gave you the story yet left the person dignity to walk away with. Perhaps the story-tellers had been given a crash course in camera technique — which would be only fair. Anyway, their stories were treated with such unquestioning sympathy that it took a real imaginative effort last night to ask whether stupidity had played even a small part in their plight. Incidentally, the film passed quietly over a worrying detail in the Mark-and-Andor story, too, when Mark spent three months in a top security prison. *Top security?* Presumably, the courts have met his sort before: the sort of mild-mannered, gay civil servant who breaks out and spreads panic in the streets, equipped with a lethal ink pad, and a little rubber stamp.

BBC1

- 6.00am Business Breakfast (10294)
- 7.00am BBC Breakfast News (CeeFax) (41565)
- 9.00am Breakfast News Extra (CeeFax) (7019316)
- 9.20am Can't Cook, Won't Cook. Two hopeless cooks are persuaded to prepare something edible (s) (719478)
- 9.45am Kilroy. Topical discussion series (s) (122671)
- 10.30am Good Morning with Anne and Nick (s) (23949)
- 12.00pm News (CeeFax), regional news and weather (925331). 12.05pm Room for Improvement. Ideas tips on energy conservation and erecting a fence (s) (8703571)
- 12.35pm Going for Gold. Quiz show with the urbane Henry Kelly (s) (3934229)
- 1.00pm One O'Clock News (CeeFax) and weather (44652). 1.30pm Regional News (9450112). 1.40pm Neighbours (CeeFax) (s) (4477890)
- 2.00pm Snowy River... the McGregor Saga with Andrew Clarke. Adventure and romance in early 20th-century Australia (s) (34881)
- 3.30pm Playdays (s) (714584). 3.50pm The Silver Brumby (s) (1748300). 4.15pm Funnymen (s) (s) (5598229). 4.20pm Johnny Briggs (s) (CeeFax) (6653749). 4.35pm Rugsby (s) (CeeFax) (s) (5533381). 5.00pm Newsround (s) (1119132). 5.10pm Blue Peter (CeeFax) (s) (124236)
- 5.35pm Neighbours. Marlene enjoys Colin's quiet attentions, while Daniel pours oil on troubled waters (CeeFax) (s) (274720)
- 6.00pm Six O'Clock News with Maryn Lewis and Andrew Harvey. (CeeFax) Weather (961)
- 6.30pm Regional News Magazines (213)
- 7.00pm Relatively Speaking. Gordon Burns holds the game show for players from three generations (CeeFax) (s) (1671)
- 7.30pm Here and Now. Reports and news features presented by Sue Lawley (CeeFax) (497)
- 8.00pm Hearts of Gold. Esther Rantzen and Carol Smilla are joined by hypnotist Paul McKenna (CeeFax) (s) (517565)
- 8.50pm Points of View with Anne Robinson (CeeFax) (s) (744045)
- 9.00pm Nine O'Clock News with Peter Sissons (CeeFax) Regional news and weather (4126)
- 9.30pm Rough Justice: Who Killed Carl Bridgewater? (CeeFax) (s) (703857)
- 10.20pm Sportsnight introduced by Tony Gubbe with Trevor Brooking. A preview of the US Masters, which begins tomorrow in Augusta, Georgia. Greyhound racing coverage from Walthamstow of the BBC TV Greyhound Trophy. Olympic countdown to Atlanta (s) (545124)
- 11.30pm FILM: True Confessions (1981) starring Robert De Niro, Robert Duval, Charles Durning, Ed Flanders and Burgess Meredith. Tough drama. A priest with political ambitions and his brother, a principled policeman, are driven apart when the priest is implicated in a cover-up after the murder of a prostitute. Directed by Ulu Grosbard (s) (585403)
- 1.15am Weather (798617)

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BBC2

- 6.00am Open University: Community Programmes Season — a Sense of Self. Learning for All: Children First (7770126)
- 6.25am An Introduction to Psychology (7555561). 6.50am Zorro (s) (883402)
- 7.15pm See Hear Breakfast News (CeeFax) and signing (4850126)
- 7.30pm Christopher Crocodile (s) (7496294). 7.35pm Postman Pat (s) (9752229). 7.50pm Peter Pan and the Pirates (s) (CeeFax) (s) (4823855). 8.15pm Teenage Mutant Hero Turtles (s) (CeeFax) (7974184). 8.35pm The Lowdown (CeeFax) (s) (5506313)
- 9.05pm Mighty Max (s) (7016228). 9.25pm F.O.T. (s) (7037449). 10.00pm Playdays (s) (697687). 10.25pm Star Trek (s) (4229584)
- 10.50pm The Tick (s) (1197836). 11.10pm Randall and Hopkirk (Deceased) (s) (885381)
- 12.00pm Great Moments and Trials of the 20th Century (59872). 12.30pm Working Lunch (33403). 1.00pm Postman Pat (s) (42922316)
- 1.15pm The Royal Institution Christmas Lectures (3/5) (s) (777861)
- 2.15pm The Andrew Neil Show (s) (7479923)
- 3.00pm News (CeeFax) and weather (7807126)
- 3.05pm Golf — the US Masters 1995 (s) (7953881)
- 3.55pm News (CeeFax) and weather (2027300)
- 4.00pm Today's the Day (s) (426) 4.30pm Ready, Steady, Cook (s) (710) 5.00pm The Oprah Winfrey Show (CeeFax) (s) (1834367)
- 5.40pm A Week to Remember (186869)
- 5.50pm More Secret Gardens. Thorp Parrow, Bedale, North Yorkshire (s) (713395)
- 6.00pm Star Trek: The Next Generation (CeeFax) (s) (549497)
- 6.45pm Buck Rogers in the 25th Century. (1/2) (s) (850316)
- 7.30pm East Takeaways on Wheels. Sahara Chohan reports from Pakistan, a prime destination for stolen four-wheel-drive vehicles from Britain (CeeFax) (s) (692)
- 8.00pm University Challenge. Imperial College v Exeter University, chaired by Jeremy Paxman (CeeFax) (s) (1861)
- 8.30pm Home Front. The home improvement show features the phenomenally successful Shaker style and a report from the Shaker Museum in Bath. Plus tips on painting a wooden floor (CeeFax) (s) (4768)
- 9.00pm Modern Times: Flatmates (CeeFax) (s) (718955)
- 9.50pm A Man's World: The Soldier. This excellent oral history series concludes by looking at the experiences of soldiers in the two world wars (CeeFax) (s) (692)
- 10.30pm Newsnight (CeeFax) (355749)
- 11.15pm Murder One: Chapter Six. Legal drama series following a murder, high-profile case (s) (CeeFax) (s) (43630)
- 12.05am Screen Firsts: The Key (178343)
- 12.30-6.00pm The Learning Zone (77701)

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CHOICE

Modern Times: Flatmates
BBC2, 9.00pm
In Hington three Cambridge graduates want two women to balance their masculinity in a "luxury period flat". In Fulham two women are in search of a man, preferably one who looks good in a towel. And three female evangelists, having prayed to Jesus before framing the ad, are seeking another young Christian to share their house in south London. Lucy Blackstad, who made *Life and Weekenders*, is a film-maker with a sharp eye for the minutiae of everyday behaviour. Who shows how recruiting a suitable flatmate can often come down to the small, irritating things, such as whether, in a mixed household, the men will always leave the laundry set down. The only pity is that the film stops just when the final decisions are being made. But it leaves Blackstad with a wonderful chance for a follow-up.

Bodyguards
ITV, 9.00pm
"I wouldn't have it if it came with the freedom on New Scotland Yard," declares John Strappin's Commander MacIntyre, as he is offered the job of heading a crack new VIP protection team. Two seconds later he has started work. It is that sort of show and that sort of script. *Bodyguards* is the creation of Jeffrey Caine, whose other credits include the latest Bond film and *The Chief*. Rarely for a police series, *The Chief* broke new ground. *Bodyguards* goes over very old ground, harking back to those action-adventure series that seemed to dominate the TV schedules about 25 years ago. The first test for Strappin's bodyguards, who include Louise Lombard and Sean Pertwee, is to protect a former African leader in Britain for a conference. Be prepared for bombs, car chases and shifty foreigners.

Dispatches: Murder in St James's
Channel 4, 9.00pm
Twelve years after the death of the policewoman Yvonne Fletcher during a demonstration outside the Libyan Embassy in London, *Dispatches* challenges a version of events and suggests a startling new one. The inquest jury found that WPC Fletcher was killed by a bullet fired from the first floor of the embassy. The episode severely poisoned Anglo-Libyan relations and helped to win British support for President Reagan's bombing of Tripoli. But Joe Layburn's report goes back over the forensic evidence and suggests that the fatal bullet came not from the embassy but from another building. Backed by expert opinion, the argument seems plausible. As to who did fire the bullet, the programme has an ingenious, if speculative, theory that seems so unlikely it could well be true.

Rough Justice: Who Killed Carl Bridgewater?
BBC1, 9.30pm
It is 18 years since the paperboy Carl Bridgewater was shot dead at Yew Tree Farm in the West Midlands, but the case will not go away. To supporters of the four men convicted of the murder, the case is a colossal miscarriage of justice. Central to the conviction was a confession by one of the men, Patrick Molloy, who died in prison in 1981. *Rough Justice* adds its voice to those who claim that the confession was drafted by the police and signed by Molloy out of fear. The programme also says that forensic evidence has come to light which should have been disclosed at the trial. In addition, there is an interview with Hubert Spencer, an early suspect in the case. The Home Secretary has declined to send the case back to the Court of Appeal. *Rough Justice* urges him to reconsider.

Peter Waymark

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- 1.55pm Home and Away (63998836)
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- 2.55-3.20pm A Country Practice (5610836)
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RFU dictates future plans to clubs

Rugby union lurches closer towards split

By DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

THE Rugby Football Union (RFU) flung down the gauntlet to its senior clubs yesterday. In a display of controlled leadership likely to win considerable sympathy from the sport's rank and file, the union asserted its right as a governing body to control the game in England.

It did so by confirming that the Courage Clubs Championship next season will have a first division of ten clubs, with relegation for the bottom two this season; that the top four will play European rugby and the remainder in an Anglo-Welsh tournament; that the second division will comprise 14 clubs and the third division 16 clubs. That goes against the clubs' desire for a 12-club first division next season and no relegation at the end of this month — and means that West Hartlepool will go down and another club will join them.

At the same time, the RFU wants to strengthen the English game by introducing a competition for nationals only. Divisional teams of English-qualified players will take on Argentina, a junior South African team and Queensland next autumn. The clubs, however, insist that this programme will leave them bereft of rugby and income for nearly two months, and will lead to bankruptcy.

The RFU's proposals have left their leading clubs, those which form English Professional Clubs Limited (EPRUC), cast as a potential breakaway movement. The first division clubs meet in London tomorrow to consider their future.

The sticking point is control of the game. The RFU believes that EPRUC seeks to establish itself as an organisational body subservient to the International Rugby Football Board, but virtually equal to the union itself with responsi-

bility for the professional side of the English game. The RFU, defending the principle of a seamless sport, will have no truck with that.

Point by point, it has rebutted a dozen draft proposals that the clubs deem vital to their continued good health, and informed Donald Kerr, the chairman of EPRUC, that the clubs' proposed management structure is unacceptable. Instead, the RFU, which has accused the clubs of protectionism, offers a new structure under the union's umbrella that will incorporate a management board equipped to deal with the day-to-day affairs of the leading clubs.

THE DECISIONS

The RFU will:

- Negotiate TV rights and sponsorship.
- Control the flow of new money to the clubs.
- Deal directly with representative players and seek one unified player contract.
- Retain relegation from the first division this season.
- Retain a 12-club first division for clubs going into Europe and a cross-border competition.
- Introduce a new divisional competition involving overseas sides.

"The money is not present in the game to justify the professional organisation which some people envisage," Cliff Brittle, the chairman of the RFU executive committee, said at Twickenham. "It might happen in three to five years' time, but it's not viable now and many clubs know it. We are not talking real money at the moment. Each club must take its own business decisions and we will do all we can to help them through this difficult period."

Malcolm Phillips, who successfully chaired the union's working party with the England squad to make the most of their earning power, was

even more stark in his warning. "The last thing we want is another club breakaway," he said. "Neither the clubs nor the union has the money to do what we want to do to fund an open game."

"People are making promises they can't keep. Players will suffer, some clubs will go bust. We will grow into the open game but we, as a union, will control the game. We don't want to be just another professional sport, we want to retain the special ethos which still exists and, by keeping central control, we can go forward."

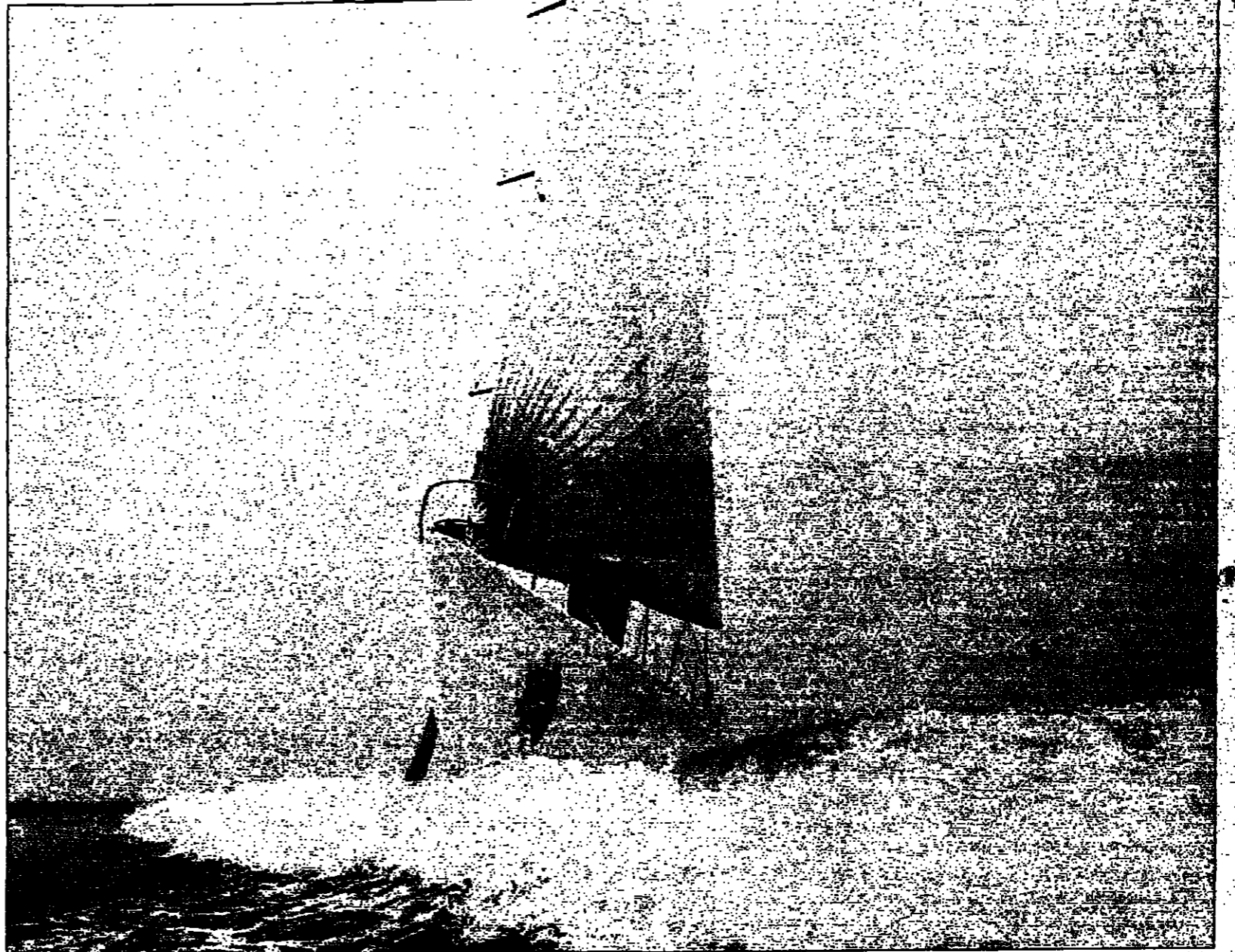
The RFU is wary of comparisons with football drawn by Sir John Hall, the chairman of Newcastle United's Sporting Club. Only last week, Sir John said that international rugby would become an "add-on" to high-profile club rugby. Don Rutherford, the union's technical director, riposted by saying that the England rugby team was among the world's top four while its football counterpart languishes in the mid-20s, a point weakened by the limited quality of international opposition in rugby union.

Brittle said: "The management structure we have offered the clubs is light years away from anything the RFU has offered them in the past. The ideal solution would be for EPRUC to say they are willing to sit down and discuss the sensible structure we have put before them."

That seems far from likely. The clubs, which have put out feelers towards the southern hemisphere and hope to negotiate their own television contracts, believe themselves to be between the devil and the deep blue sea.

"We are very disappointed," Kerr said. "I hope by Thursday we will know exactly what the RFU has said and we will give a measured response." A rift, which rugby union has avoided since that with the northern clubs a century ago, is looming.

Bath prepared, page 43



Nicorette Grand Mistral, the new boat of Ingvall, from Sweden, performed impressively during a short race on the Hamble yesterday

Grand Mistral plans blown off course

By EDWARD GORMAN
SAILING CORRESPONDENT

IT WAS hard to know whether to celebrate the arrival of *Nicorette Grand Mistral*, Ludde Ingvall's new boat, on the Hamble yesterday or regret its very existence. Ingvall, the round-the-world skipper from Sweden, had brought it over from Marseilles to show off to the British press, no doubt partly in a bid to increase support for the apparently doomed Grand Mistral Race.

The boat, designed by Bruce Farr, is an impressive looking beast. It is capable of an exciting performance — 20 knots in 28 knots of wind — and showed good speed yesterday in light conditions against Ingvall's old mini-maxi, which romped away with the Fastnet Race last year.

Yet it looks more and more as though the new boat has

been built for a race that will never happen. The Grand Mistral is supposed to start this September from Marseilles. The idea was to blend the Whitbread and BT Global Challenge concepts by offering syndicates completed one-design yachts ready to race round the world in a test of pure sailing skill, rather than of the ability of designers or the size of budgets.

Pierre Fehlmann, the veteran off-shore racing yachtsman from France, who came up with the idea, hoped that sponsors would be attracted to a cheaper and more easily understood race, but he has been proved wrong.

With just five months to go to the start, only three syndicates have definitely signed up, one of which is Ingvall's *Nicorette* team; the other two are Grant Dalton (*Merit Cup*) and Marc Pajot (*Marseilles Provençe*). Ingvall is thus in the faintly ridiculous position

of training a crew and tuning a boat that he is unlikely ever to race in the event for which it was built. However, this is not his problem.

Pharmacia and Upjohn, who make *Nicorette* anti-smoking patches, have paid

the agreed charter fee for the yacht up to the time when the race was supposed to have finished, but Fehlmann has agreed to pay it back if the event does not get off the ground. Ingvall thus gets a new yacht to campaign with virtually for free.

Yesterday, he said that he still believes that the Grand Mistral will happen, but he is not sure when. He said that there must be at least eight boats at the start to make it a worthwhile contest, which, at present, is out of the question, and he suggested one solution to Fehlmann's nightmare could be to run the Mistral maxis as a separate class in the next Whitbread, in 18 months' time.

"At some stage, administrators in the UK and elsewhere have to start doing what's best for the sport; they have to serve the sport," he said in comments possibly directed at the Whitbread organisers.

"Running two round-the-world events in parallel is not a good formula for the sport."

Apart from the difficulties facing Fehlmann, who may end up with eight one-design maxis with no race to run them in, the likely failure of the Mistral project may not be unequivocally good news for the Whitbread.

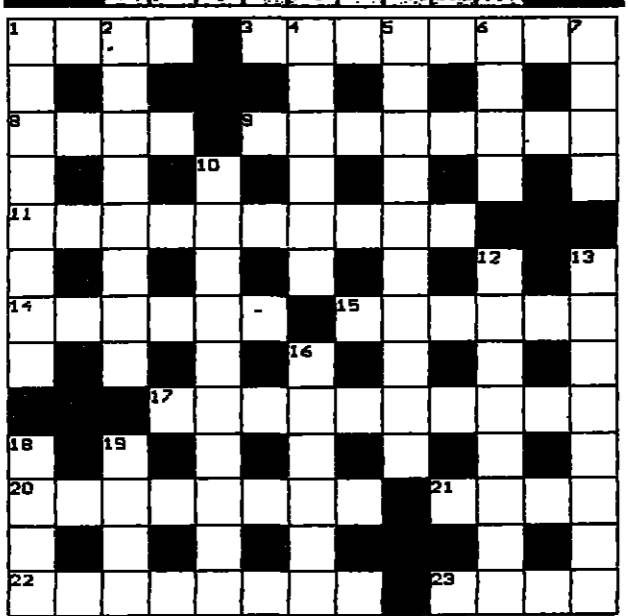
In its early optimistic months, the Mistral distracted a number of the top skippers and sponsors, and has directed three into what now looks like a cul-de-sac. As one guest on board Ingvall's boat put it: "The great pity is that we may end up with two half-cock races — the Grand Mistral took people's eye of the ball."

There was good news, however, for the Whitbread yesterday with the announcement of a second, apparently confirmed, entry in the race. The Russia 300 syndicate will be skippered by Eugene Platon.



Ingvall: promotional visit

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD



No 752

ACROSS

- 1 Wrinkle loose scrum (4)
- 2 Using profanities (3)
- 3 Miniature playperson (4)
- 4 Letter: round (8)
- 5 Big, heavy, and awkward (10)
- 6 A slat: a museum (6)
- 7 Sad mood, addressed by Keats (10)
- 8 Improbable (8)
- 9 Inclined slope: scum (4)
- 10 Eternal boy (5,3)
- 11 Liquefy (4)

DOWN

- 1 Derivative mockery (8)
- 2 1492 Atlantic crossover (8)
- 3 Capricious fancy (6)
- 4 Fellow-criminal (10)
- 5 Misfortunes (4)
- 6 Involving much split blood (4)
- 7 Woeple (4-6)
- 8 Write comments on (8)
- 9 Doesn't budge (5,3)
- 10 A flower: Wooster's nice aunt (6)
- 11 Swallow hard (4)
- 12 Hole for egg coin (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 751

ACROSS: 1 Claimant 5 Atom 9 Breaking point 10 Shin 11 Integer 13 House 15 Thrust 16 Secrete 20 To go 23 On the safe side 24 Taco 29 Seat belt

DOWN:

1 Cube 2 Aleph 3 Makings 4 Nuncio 6 Trigger 7 Maturity 8 Spot 12 Phase out 14 Ascentic 16 Hot seat 17 Debase 19 Eden 21 Guide 22 Bent

SOLUTION TO TIMES TWO CROSSWORD 747

In association with BRITISH MIDLAND

ACROSS: 1 Pads 3 Mobster 8 Curtain 9 Lowly 10 Foyer 11 Flaccid 13 On the make 17 Awkward 19 Plate 20 Negus 22 Atavism 23 Henpeck 24 Wren

DOWN: 1 Pacific 2 Dirty work 3 Mansfield Park 4 Balas 5 Tow 6 Riyadh 7 Carrot 12 Chevalier 14 Appeal 15 Paunch 16 Sermon 18 Aisle 21 Gun

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2nd PRIZE of a return ticket to anywhere on BRITISH MIDLAND'S domestic network is J Richie, Crosby, Liverpool. All flights subject to availability.

Busst will fight for career

Rob Hughes says the stricken
Coventry defender is assured
of top class remedial treatment



David Busst, the Coventry City defender whose right leg was so dramatically broken in front of 50,332 spectators at Old Trafford on Monday, lies in hope in more ways than one.

He is in Hope Hospital, in Manchester, where the fracture has been stabilised but will not be reset until next week at the earliest; and, of course, he is in hope that, when the surgeons have done their best, when the predicted year of rehabilitation and committed work from him and all around him at Coventry are through, he will put together his broken career.

It is this marriage of medical science and sport that presents a footballer with his greatest fear. Busst came into the full-time game late. He is almost 29, married with a young daughter, and he joined Coventry City from non-League Moor Green in January 1992. "I feel sorry, sometimes, for young players coming straight into the game from school," he said then. "It's the only life they know, yet it could be snatched away by injury, and they then have to try to find some other employment. I had eight years in business, and that will stand me in good stead."

Insurance was Busst's business and he will surely not have been lax in joining the Professional Footballers Association (PFA) voluntary accident insurance scheme that allows players to pay a premium of one per cent of total cover — for £100,000 worth of cover the premium is £1,000. The PFA paid out more than £8 million to members between 1980 and 1995, all too often having to calculate the non-contributory payments, based on service and earnings. While the tackle by John

Salako, of Coventry, that broke the leg of Steve Harkness, of Liverpool, last Saturday, did bring recriminations because it was late and high, mostly, the injuries arise from pure accidents, like the one involving Busst and Denis Irwin.

Yet, however generous the compensation, the trauma of that scene in Manchester will haunt those who think and care about sport.

Busst was at least fortunate



Busst: late entrant

in one way. Immediately he fell, both the players around him and, particularly, the physiotherapist who was first to lay hands on him, knew exactly what they were doing.

Dion Dublin, his own captain, had broken a leg, and lost some of the lustre from his career, while he was a Manchester United player. George Dalton, the physiotherapist, also knew the feeling. He had to retire at 27 after twice breaking a leg, first at Newcastle United and then with Brighton and Hove Albion.

Dalton, in his first years as a qualified physiotherapist with Birmingham City, saved the career of the fledgling Trevor Francis. In that case, there was a hidden injury, a snapped tendon behind the knee and, while even specialists had differed on the need for surgery or rest, it was Dalton's perseverance that ensured that Francis would not be risked until surgical exploration had been carried out.

Dalton, having spent Monday night with Busst, said yesterday that he had seen

only once in his career such an obviously compounded injury. He followed the basic rule: "Do no further harm."

There were two doctors on the scene, but, as Dalton said: "Normally it comes down to the physio. The job was to get Dave onto the stretcher without twisting him."

Dalton then had to make judgments in a matter of seconds that would have taxed an orthopaedic specialist. He had to organise the lifting of Busst on to the stretcher with as much speed and compassion as possible.

Once in the hands of Raymond Ross, the orthopaedic consultant, the extent of the injury, more consistent with a motorcycle accident than a sporting injury, was such that he could only use an external fixator, hope to stabilise the break and fix it with a nail before surgery to set the bone next week.

He will then hand Busst over to John Aldridge, the Coventry consultant, who is well known to sportsmen and women across many disciplines. So, the player is in the best possible hands, but, ultimately, his career — if indeed it can be resumed — will be down to his own courage and determination.

Dalton worked with Busst throughout last season while he recovered from a double hernia. "The boy's got a big heart, you can see from the way he plays," he said. "He will fight and work at it."

However, when he does return, as prognosis says he will, he will be nudging 30. "You can't even think about that," Dalton said. "I will treat him as an 18-year-old, and that way both of us will try to restore him to the fullest possible fitness."

Dr Stuttaford, page 8

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